

ANNIE BESANT





THE  
BESANT SPIRIT

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# THE BESANT SPIRIT

VOLUME 3  
INDIAN PROBLEMS

COMPILED MAINLY FROM THE WRITINGS  
OF  
DR. ANNIE BESANT

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## PUBLISHER'S NOTE

THIS concluding part of the present trilogy on the Besant Spirit gives a collection of statements on Indian problems by Dr. Besant, culled from her own signed writings in *New India*, through which day after day for over two decades she sounded a clarion call to India to awaken to her great destiny and claim her rightful place in the comity of nations.

The three volumes correspond closely to the well known triplicity in all manifestation: Will, Wisdom, Loving Service. The fundamental principle of life, signifying the self-existent Will—"the thing-in-itself"—is covered in the first volume. Wisdom, which is Will objectivized, drawn out by the process we term "education,"—education of man's entire nature—is treated in the second. Loving Service, or Activity, which is concrete Will and Wisdom, as typified in dedicated Service to all life around us, is the subject of the present volume.

The Publishers believe it is appropriate to point out this fundamental triplicity working through the great personality we know as Annie Besant. To her the Science of Politics was an aspect of the Divine Wisdom, whose principles are firmly based on the bedrock

of humanity's spiritual oneness, and not on expediency, which, alas, so largely dominates world politics today.

The principles and policies which she propounded and in the light of which she commented upon passing events, are as valid today as they were then. These are the Eternal Laws of Life, *Sanâtana Dharma*, and India's unique gift to the world.

It was not without significance that Dr. Besant devoted the best part of her life and gifts to India. We know how loyally she responded to the direction of her Superiors to wake up India, because she knew that a contented and prosperous India is an assurance of the Peace and Progress of the world. As she strove so magnificently to uphold the glorious Dharma of India, so the Publishers send forth this little volume to inspire those who love India, who love Liberty, and who would follow in the footsteps of this Apostle of India's Freedom and help India to her fulfilment.

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## INTRODUCTION

IN introducing this third volume of *The Besant Spirit* let me say that we enter now into the most wonderful period of Dr. Besant's life. All her life she was a warrior. Indeed, now and then she would sign herself "Annie Besant : Warrior" with that little curling smile upon her lips as who should say—Just a touch of fun, but very serious fun. When that smile came we knew that she was about to say very lightly something of deep significance, something we might almost miss because it seemed to be said almost off-hand and as a casual utterance to which no particular attention need be paid.

She was a Warrior, a fighter, but such a fighter as would meet the standard of Kurukshetra. Uncompromising as to principles, using all the sword-play of an unsurpassed oratory and of her giant intellect, relentless in moving towards the goal of her endeavour, willing to make any sacrifices for the cause she happened to be championing, nevertheless she was chivalrous, as we sometimes thought, to a fault. I used sometimes to wonder if she did not treat her opponents—I do not say enemies, she had none—better than those who

were standing shoulder to shoulder with her. I think she did treat her opponents better in the sense that she considered them more, for there was no need for her to consider her own people. She need not waste time upon us, for to us she was the General, and we delighted in giving to her instant obedience, not the obedience that was slavery, though from time to time the obedience that was blind, for we knew, as every soldier on the battlefield knows, that the General had far wider vision than ourselves and that we should show our greatest wisdom in giving her, especially in emergencies, our instant co-operation. In any case, she was, as I have said, chivalrous to a fault, and it must have been as great a pleasure to fight against her as to fight on her side, for her type of fighting was the type that bred respect and understanding even though she always fought to win, and never rested until victory was achieved.

This period of her life, from 1914 onwards, was the period of her greatest glory, for not only did she feel she was fighting for her own Motherland—she was the greatest Indian of them all in many ways—but she was fighting under orders. For many years beforehand she had known and had come into constant personal contact with the great Teacher who had been her Guru in lives gone by and who was to guide her once more in this life. There was constant converse between them, and from time to time He, or it might

even be at rare intervals ONE even greater than He, would give her what she was pleased to call her "marching orders", upon which she would act instantly and to the very letter of them.

It was this great Teacher who desired her to begin the great political fight which was to come with the editing of a daily newspaper. To hear was to obey, and she bought, in 1914, *The Madras Standard*, which she renamed *New India*, from which the contents of the present volume have been selected.

From that moment forward nothing could hold her back, nothing could daunt her. Over seventy years of age though she was, her energy was that of youth, her enthusiasm was liquid fire, while her devotion to the cause of India's freedom electrified the whole country. The older generation of politicians—she could never belong to such a body—did not know where it was. She wrenched Indian politics out of its automatic and placid theorising, made it a living and a vital issue before the country and the whole Empire, and set a political pace which thrilled the younger people, but caused conventional politicians to shake their heads and stand aghast at this stormy petrel, or shall we say at this devastating, apparently reckless, utterly unaccountable thunderbolt? She was devastating. She was indeed a thunderbolt. And she was unaccountable, for her guidance came directly from the Wise Men of India, the very Rishis Themselves, and her

cause was *Theirs*, not just an expression of her own passionate love of freedom. But she was not and could not be reckless. There was deep purpose no less in all the seeming vagaries of her manifold activities than in her supreme battle-cry—*Swaraj*, self-government for India.

And we who were round about her knew this full well. It was as if she drew us into the maelstrom of her God-given and therefore unconquerable determinations, and we became exalted in dedication to that mission which was to set India afire and make her freedom inevitable.

Of all this *New India* was the oriflamme, and it went before a growing army of men and women and youth to victory after victory, and though at last it was to be seen no more it was borne in millions of hearts and is even now leading on to the triumph to achieve which Dr. Besant caused it to be unfurled. 1914 marked a new era in Indian politics, Dr. Besant's interment in 1917 rallied the country to Home Rule as nothing else had ever done, and her Presidentship of the Indian National Congress session in Calcutta in December of the same year made clear the issues and set a battle-front between the forces of reaction and those of progress, whether western or eastern.

It is impossible to give any adequate picture of her activities not only throughout the length and breadth of India, in city after city in Britain, but

also throughout the whole of the British Empire. In Madras itself she worked day in and day out, generally from about 10.30 a. m. until nearly 5.30 p.m. Before 10.30 she worked at Adyar. At 5.30 she would be seen having a cup of coffee at the Young Men's Indian Association, a fine building in Armenian Street given by herself to the youth of the city. It would have to be very important business which could cause her to forego this solemn and happy ritual. But often there was very important business. So many people had to be seen, committees to be attended, and above all those wonderful meetings in the Gokhale Hall, itself part of the Association premises. Most young people of to-day are too young to remember those meetings of twenty years ago. The Hall packed to the brim with youth and a sprinkling of the older generation sedately seated on the platform. Enters the white-robed figure of the Editor of *New India*, almost gorgeously arrayed in silken sari, with an H. R. pendant in green and gold enamel—green and gold being the then Home Rule colours. An entourage of those who were to be the principal speakers—and the chairman, if she was not herself to take the chair, as she so often did. A torrent of applause. A cheery smile if she was not too engrossed in deep conversations with her colleagues. Then up to the platform. Wave upon wave of cheers. A bow to the audience with folded hands. A rustling

of chairs and a general fussification as the entourage settled itself down. And then a Hall-wide hush of expectancy, with everybody impatient to hear the world's greatest orator demand freedom for India in language that no one could possibly mistake.

If Dr. Besant were the chairman she would make a few, very brief, opening remarks, absolutely to the point, and with all that graciousness which she alone had, and which she used with such perfect tact to make everybody, and specially those who had to speak before her, feel entirely at home. No small ordeal was it to speak in her presence, for not only did it seem so futile to keep an audience waiting with one's halting remarks when every member of the audience had come to hear one person and one person only, but what was worse one knew full well that the audience was impatient to get one over and out of the way. Woe betide any speaker who at all trespassed upon the endurance of the audience ! He or she would soon receive vocal evidence of the fact that a word more and there would be a shouting down. And then, when the last speaker had exerted his voice upon ears that were growing more and more deaf if they were not already so, then—Annie Besant. Quietly rising from her chair she would stand silent for a few moments while the audience gave vent to its relief that at last she was to be heard, a little bow of acknowledgment, the hands folded, or one hand



resting, perhaps, on the adjoining table, a few tiny pages of notes on occasion, and then a still small voice which just for a moment could hardly be heard beyond the first few rows in front of her. An eager craning of heads beyond and from the gallery. But the crescendo was at work, and soon wave upon wave of scintillating oratory swept through the Hall—with all the rich jewels of oratory adorning sentence after sentence, period after period. A climax is reached, perhaps a magnificent simile, so complicated as it seemed that I would wonder how it could ever be resolved. Would she remember the whole thread of it from its inception? Must it not break down through sheer complexity? Sometimes, I confess, I was in an agony of nervousness. How foolish I was! Did she at any time lose any thread? Was she ever at a loss either for a word or how to finish a simile, a metaphor, however involved? Never, and I have heard her constantly for over thirty years.

And from the climax, from the splendid finale to a simile, she would proceed to a new motif—the old perfectly rounded off and fitted into the word picture she was painting. From the heights of a consummation, with a voice ringing through vast distances and yet so perfectly modulated that she seemed but to be speaking in just a conversational voice, she would descend to the foundations of a new word structure—yet another part of the plan which was in her mind,

and in her consciousness above the mind, in all its details. Then the building once more, and a new delight for the audience to see with their very eyes, and to hear with their very ears, the master craftsman at work. True indeed that the ears were not alone the medium of communication between the audience and the speaker. The eyes saw, and the sight added immensely to the sounds that were heard. It was as necessary to look at her as to hear her, for the sight of her was an inspiration, and her movements, whether of body as a whole or of her arms, were an education by themselves in that grace which must ever accompany all true oratory. I think I have come to know her gestures by heart. I think I was able to anticipate each one as it came, even though she had no set gestures, ringing innumerable and different changes on the gesture accompaniment as she developed theme after theme. But somehow one became able to see beforehand as in a film thrown upon a screen the whole picture of her immediate utterances—a picture all the more wonderful in that, kaleidoscope-like, it was ever changing and one wondered which particular variation on the essential theme she would finally choose as she came to it. Dr. Besant has herself said more than once that as she spoke she saw before her the immediate continuation of her speech, not in set sentences but in a choice of sentences, out of which she would, while speaking, choose

the particular phraseology most suitable to the development of her general theme. Those very near to her in thought and in work would sometimes catch a glimpse of the wealth of alternatives before her, and almost see her choosing.

GEORGE S. ARUNDALE



## KEEP THE FLAG FLYING

Keep the Flag of Freedom flying  
Through the troubled night.  
Round the crimson banner rally,  
Children of the Light.

Boldly follow where She beckons,  
Bravely play your part ;  
Goddess of your worship is She,  
Monarch of your heart.

Keep the Flag of Freedom flying  
To your latest breath.  
If you cannot win Her living,  
Conquer Her by death.

ANNIE BESANT



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## EDUCATIVE WORK FOR HOME RULE

### I

AS the Historical Introductions to *How India Wrought for Freedom and India—a Nation* have received high praise and have excited equally strong anger, I propose, in a series of articles, at once to justify those articles and to demonstrate India's remarkable capacity for managing her own affairs. It is said that the descriptions of past wealth and prosperity are overcoloured; a more detailed description will show that they are under-coloured. The ignorance of the ordinary Englishman about modern India is equalled by his ignorance about ancient India; and those who write in defence of the continuance of autocracy in India are content to sling epithets at me rather than face the facts of the past, facts showing that India was far happier and more prosperous when she ruled herself than she is now when she is ruled by foreigners. It is strange that the defenders of the present system base their objections to Home Rule on their love for the masses of the population, whom they dare not hand over to their countrymen; whereas all the evidence shows

that the masses were infinitely better off under the rule of their countrymen than they are now. There were occasional wars and invasions, as now <sup>1</sup> in Europe, in some of which the masses suffered, though not to the degree suffered by Belgium and Serbia; yet the former cannot be held, any more than the latter, to disqualify the descendants of the suffering people for Self-Government, nor to justify India, China and Japan in marching upon Europe to impose on her better Government.

My introductions, so far as "recognized history" goes, begin with a few words on the age of the Lord Buddha, and the invasion of Darius, and then pass to the first great Hindu Emperor of "the historic period," Chandragupta Maurya. After the brief notice which was all that space permitted, the reader was referred to Chanakya's *Art of Government*; and I propose to take advantage of Mr. Narendranath Law's *Studies in Ancient Hindu Polity*, which is based on Chanakya's *Arthashastra*, a book usefully discussed in the recent Sir Subramaniam Lectures by Prof. K. V. Rangaswami Aiyengar. Also to use Mr. Pramathanath Banerjea's *Public Administration in Ancient India*, a most valuable work.

The objects of human life are said by the Ancients to be Dharma : duty, Kâma : pleasure, Artha : wealth. *Arthashastra* therefore deals with worldly well-being,

<sup>1</sup> January 1917.

and a book thus named may, like Chanakya's, deal with public life, public affairs, politics, and the like. He defines politics as "the science which treats of what is right in public policy and what is not, and of power and weakness."

The Department of Public Works is the one first dealt with in the *Studies*, and it included, says Narendranath Babu :

Among other things the working of mines, the opening of irrigation works, the establishment of factories ; the maintenance of preserves and grazing-grounds, of highways of commerce, waterways, land-routes and other facilities for communication ; the establishment of markets and stores ; the construction of embankments, dams and bridges ; the planting of fruit and flower trees, of medicinal plants and herbs (*i.e.*, the establishment of Ayurvedic and pharmaceutical gardens) ; and lastly, the State protection of the disabled, the helpless and the infirm, and also of the lower animals.

When it is remembered that the Empire of Chandragupta stretched from the Hindu Kush to the Nerbudda, from the Arabian Sea to the Bay of Bengal, with the exception of some minor kingdoms, it will be realized that such a P. W. D. entails close and careful organization and administration, and we find these existing. The *Arthashastra* states that there were two kinds of mines, (1) ocean mines and (2) land mines,

and for each expert superintendents were appointed. The first looked after diamonds and other precious gems, pearls, corals, conch-shells and salt, regulating trade in these, and it may be added that Megasthenes mentioned the wearing of robes, "ornamented with precious stones." The superintendent of land-mines had to be a man scientifically trained, for he had to prospect for new mines, to "infer from slags and ashes and other such indications whether a mine had been exhausted or not." The mineral ores were specially studied, and he was to pay attention to "depth of colour, weight, smell, taste, oiliness, adhesiveness, power of amalgamating with particular metals," etc. Metals are classified by their properties, as are metallic ores; the characteristic of ores containing silver, gold, "float-gold," bitumen, copper, lead, tin, iron, etc., are named. Then follow directions for the purification of metals, and for rendering them malleable. The methods given are wholly different from the modern, and as it is known that the ancients were singularly skilful in their manipulation of metals, it might be worth while to experiment with them.

The purified metals were distributed to artificers, for the manufacture of various commodities, ornaments, weapons, minting, etc.

It would seem that, so far as metals and mining were concerned, Chandragupta's P. W. D. was decidedly expert.

II <sup>1</sup>

Other Superintendents had charge of the Forests "and fixed the dues that were to be paid by people for making use of forests for various purposes"; the peasantry have had certain forest rights from time immemorial concerning the grazing of cattle, the cutting of wood, the gathering of leaves, etc., and the modern Forest Laws, as petitions show, are the cause of much bewilderment and discontent. Some eighteen or twenty years ago an Indian official in northern India told me that the real danger to British rule in this country was in the growing discontent of the peasantry, who found themselves harassed by laws they did not understand, laws which had deprived them of their treasured immemorial rights; and I have had many occasions since to realise the truth of his words.

Then there were Superintendents of the Armoury, charged with the manufacture and storage of weapons; of Weights and Measures; of Tolls; of Shipping, the duties including care of the water-ways for merchant shipping, the looking "after navigation on the sea, rivers and lakes," and the prevention of piracy. Definite

<sup>1</sup> These articles are based on *Studies in Ancient Hindu Polity* by N. Law, and *Public Administration in Ancient India* by P. Banerjea. Both these books are commentaries on Chanakya's *Arthashastra* written in the 4th century B. C. and the statements made are authenticated by exact references.

ocean ways to foreign countries were marked out. Ancient writers mention Indian merchants and their valuable trades, and Indian shipping, as Professor Radhakumund Mukerji has shown us, was a very important asset in the kingdoms and empires of India. Canals were much used by traders, transport by water being cheaper than transport by land, and an interesting description is given of various kinds of ships and boats. There were ocean-going ships, liable to tolls when they entered a harbour, used by sea-going merchants. Boats used for pearl-fishing. Large vessels for rivers navigable all the year round, and small boats for shallow rivers. Ferry-boats were also used, and royal barges. Pirate boats, literally "boats for injury," have a class of their own, and were presumably of a special build, as they are to be pursued and destroyed whenever found. Then comes a heterogenous list of water-vehicles of a less dignified kind, each with its own name ; pieces of timber tied together—see the present fishermen's boats ; bamboos tied together ; a bottle-gourd ; a basket covered with skin ; a leather bag, inflated ; a canoe ; a float made of rhinoceros skin ; a float of woven reeds. The Superintendent of Shipping must have had his hands full. Indian pilots, by the way, performed the unpatriotic service of bringing into harbour Alexander's ships. Harbours were constructed, and seaports on the Malabar coast, such as Mouziris (Murjari), were visited by Greek ships, and

later, Pliny speaks of twenty ships going out of the Red Sea to India.

Manufactures also had Superintendents, as of weaving, chariots, liquors, etc. Slaughter-houses were supervised. Superintendents of charities and religious institutions were also appointed. More important were the Departments of Irrigation, Agriculture and Police.

Irrigation on a large scale has always been in India one of the chief cares of the State, inasmuch as on the fertility of the land depended the prosperity of the Nation. Megasthenes mentions the fact that the greater part of the land was under irrigation, and consequently bore two crops in a year. Mr. Banerjea writes :

Irrigation was practised in India from very early times. In the *Rigveda* we find mention of canals. In the *Mahābhārata*, Narada, enquiring about the state of the kingdom, is made to ask Yudhishtira : “ Are large tanks and lakes established all over the kingdom at proper distances, in order that agriculture may not be entirely dependent on the showers of heaven ? ” So Manu advises the King to build tanks, walls, cisterns and fountains. The larger irrigational works were undertaken by the State, while the smaller ones were often constructed by private enterprise. In order to encourage private enterprise in this direction, rents and taxes were remitted.

for a certain number of years for the construction of new tanks and for the repair of old works. The village communities, and sometimes private individuals, were held responsible for keeping irrigational works in repair, and punishments were inflicted on people who destroyed them or neglected to maintain them.

Fines were inflicted for letting water out of the canals except by the sluice gates, and for putting any obstacle in the way of a free flow. Megasthenes speaks of the officers who "inspect the sluices by which water is let out from the main canals into other branches, so that every one may have an equal supply of it." There were four main methods of the application of water to the land, and the water-tax varies according to the one used; the primitive method of watering by hand, presumably in the little hand-made channels still used; carrying it away in vessels on the shoulders; using some mechanical appliance; raising it from wells, tanks, etc., as by bullocks and wind-mills. A Gupta Inscription tells of an official who "laboriously built up with a great masonry work, properly constructed, the lake Sudarsana . . . so that it would last for all eternity". The dam was built at Girnar, and, in Ashoka's time, the Governor of Surashtra made canals to irrigate from the lake. In the fifth century of the Christian era it was repaired, after a rebuilding in 150 A.D.



Closely allied to Irrigation is Agriculture, and the Superintendent of this Department not only supervised the State lands, but also strove to improve general cultivation by introducing improved methods, distributing good seeds, making forecasts of weather, etc. The care of live stock came under this Department, and formed a very important section thereof, no less than six officers being over sub-departments: the superintendent of cows; of pastures and grazing-grounds; of game; of elephants; of forest and forest produce; of horses.

"Cows" included "buffaloes, sheep, goats, asses, camels, pigs, mules, and dogs"; milkers and churners were appointed, each in charge of 100 head of cattle, made up of aged cows, milch cows, pregnant cows, young cows, and cow-calves. Four bulls were assigned to the herd. A register of the animals was kept and they were branded, and it is noticeable that one of the varieties noted is "cattle of which the flesh was food," but calves, milch cows and bulls might not be slaughtered. Cows were milked once or twice a day according to the season. Diet tables are given, regulating the amount and kinds of food. "Causing pain with sticks" was punished by a fine, double as much for large quadrupeds as for small.

Care was taken not to exhaust pastures by continuous grazing, a rotation being followed through the year. Hunters were appointed to safeguard the herds of cattle and they were directed to summon help, if

needed, by blowing conch-shells, sending carrier pigeons, or in other ways.

The keeper of game was in charge of special forests kept for preserving animals, and these were not allowed to be entered. Birds, fishes, deer, and other animals which did not prey on life, calves, bulls, milch-cows, elephants, horses, oxen, asses and men might not be killed, nor might certain specially named birds be killed though preying on living creatures (crane, osprey, goose, swan, etc.) nor sacred birds and beasts. But birds, fishes and beasts that lived on other living creatures might be captured or killed.

Minute directions are given as to the care of horses, their classes, their measurements, their food, their stables, their training—the latter extraordinarily elaborate.

Elephants played a great part in ancient warfare, and hence were included in the live stock ; directions are given for the upkeep of the elephant forests, the capture and taming of wild elephants, their food, stables, training for war and peace. Chandragupta's trained war-elephants were one of the most formidable divisions of his army.

### III

An Empire so large as that of Chandragupta had necessarily a complicated machinery for the administration of justice, the Courts ranging from the Village

Court, where the elders decided petty cases, up to the King's Court, the Court of final appeal for the gravest offences. These lower Courts were graded, and sat in the towns which were the headquarters of an increasing number of villages—districts and sub-districts, Pramathanath Babu calls them; they were of two kinds, each of which dealt with offences which came within a certain classification, personal offences or community offences; but the lists given a little overlap each other, robbery and violence coming under the first head while murder comes under the second. Then we hear of stationary and itinerant Courts, a Court entitled to use the King's seal, and the highest in which the King himself sat. There are family councils—like the *concile de famille* in modern France—and guilds. Three Judges were held by some authorities to be sufficient to form a Court, but Chanakya preferred six. There was no distinction in the Courts which tried civil and criminal cases, but, as before noted, there was the definite view that a man should be tried “by his peers,” by men of the same trade or profession as himself, and that local disputes should be decided by neighbours who were acquainted with the litigants. Arbitration was popular, and was used “by guilds of artisans, assemblies of co-inhabitants, meetings of religious sects, and by other bodies duly authorised by the King.” Down to the present day we have the survival of this in caste panchayats, whose

decisions are accepted by the disputants. Where persons were dissatisfied with a decision, they could appeal to the next higher Court. "A case tried in the village goes to the city ; and one tried in the city goes to the King ; but there is no appeal from the decision of the King, whether the decision be right or wrong."

Procedure was very carefully laid down ; a suit must begin with a plaint, followed by a summons, and then a reply, and then ensue a number of technical details, dealing fully with the stages of a contested suit. Evidence was of three kinds, oral, documentary and material—"instruments used, his advisers and abettors, the article stolen and any intermediaries," says the *Arthashastra*. The eligibility or non-eligibility of witnesses was defined, and to perjury heavy penalties were attached. It is difficult sometimes to understand why very opposite conditions should make a witness ineligible ; for instance, a man learned in the Vedas was ineligible ; so also was a Chandala—an outcaste. Another peculiar institution was the attaching to law-courts certain agents, whose duty it was to find out secretly the facts and to report them to the Judges, who used their own discretion as to the credence to be attached to them. The Judges themselves were liable to penalties if they judged wrongly. Chanakya says : "If the Judge, or the director, unjustly fines anybody, he shall be fined twice the amount. If he condemns any person unjustly to bodily punishment,

he shall himself suffer the same punishment, or be fined twice the amount of the ransom payable"—a very wholesome doctrine. In order that the judges might be fearless, and unswayed by temptation "the administration of justice was kept separate from the executive functions of the State, and no interference with judicial business by the executive was permitted."

The law of contracts was very fully developed, and it is noteworthy that a contract must not, as regards its object and consideration, be against justice and good policy. "A concrete example given in the *Arthashastra* will make it clear. If a person, who is being carried away by flood, or is caught in a fire, or is in danger from wild animals, be rescued on his promise to give to his rescuer not only the whole of his property but also his sons, wife and himself as slaves, the promiser cannot be made to perform his promise, it being opposed to all justice and common sense, and therefore illegal."

Sales were made by public auction, the fact being first announced in the presence of a number of householders and then by crier. There were certain restrictions as to the persons to whom lands might be sold. It is well to notice that the legal literature of India is voluminous, and is spread over very many centuries, much of it being still customary law. Hence the argument that it is theoretical and not practical is manifestly absurd.

Another proof that the writers were dealing with actual facts comes from the testimony of foreigners. Babu Pramathanath Banerjea writes :

“Theft,” says Megasthenes, “is of very rare occurrence. . . . The simplicity of their laws and their contracts is proved by the fact that they seldom go to law. They have no suits about pledges or deposits, nor do they require either seals or witnesses, but make their deposits, and confide in each other. Their houses and property they generally leave unguarded. These things indicate that they possess good, sober sense.” This statement is confirmed by Hiuen Tsiang, the great Chinese monk, who travelled in India a thousand years after Megasthenes. His words are : “ With respect to the ordinary people, although they are naturally light-minded, they are upright and honourable. In money matters they are without craft, and in administering justice they are considerate. They dread the retribution of another state of existence and make light of things of this world. They are not deceitful or treacherous in their conduct, and are faithful to their oaths and promises. In their rules of government there is remarkable rectitude, while in their behaviour there is much gentleness and sweetness.”

Others, such as Fa-Hian, in the fifth century A.D., in the time of Chandragupta-Vikramaditya, might be quoted ; he bears witness to the safety of the roads,

remarking that he was not once robbed during his travels, and he makes mention of charitable institutions, rest-houses, and describes the free hospital at Pataliputra, supported by the rich, to which "come all poor and helpless patients, suffering from all kinds of infirmities. They are well taken care of, and a doctor attends them, food and medicine being supplied according to their wants. Thus they are made quite comfortable, and when they are well they may go away." He, like Megasthenes before him, and Hiuen Tsiang after him, notes the virtue and the prosperity of the people.

#### IV

The last point that we need touch upon in relation to the Empire of Chandragupta Maurya is the position of monarchs in the early days of India. The West takes it for granted that they were all absolute rulers, and Oriental despotism has become a catch-phrase with which all sober examination is dismissed. A few phrases of Manu and of other ancient writers of Dharmashastras are taken as representing universal facts for India, and the historical records, which contain instances of the deposition and even the execution of bad monarchs are entirely overlooked. The general theory of the Dharmashastras—with their constant vivid recognition of the Divine agency in the State,

apart from the varying practice as we find it in the Purânas, the Itihasa, and in books like the Arthashastra—was that the supreme power in the State was the Law, the Divine Law. Of this Law, the Monarch was the supreme agent, and to this Law the Monarch owed the most absolute obedience. He administered it in his kingdom, but he was himself its first subject, and if he disregarded it, he was destroyed. This impersonal Law stood above the personal Monarch, and while it clothed the throne with its majesty, it overthrew the throne occupied by an unworthy sovereign. The Rod of Justice smote every transgressor, King, Noble, and People. Bhishma warns King Yudhishtira in ever-memorable words: "Weakness is more powerful than even the greatest power, for that power which is scorched by weakness becomes totally exterminated. If a person who has been humiliated or struck, fail, while shrieking for assistance, to obtain a protector, divine chastisement overtakes the King and brings about his destruction. . . . When a weak person fails to find a rescuer, the great Rod of divine chastisement falls." In these modern days, when "God" lives in a far-off heaven, it is difficult for men to understand the power of the idea of an ever-active Presence guiding the affairs of men. We see it in such stories as those of Vena, Nahusha, Sudas, Sumukha, and Nemi, Kings struck down because of pride. Moreover, the choice of the heir to the throne depends



on good conduct. Sagara banishes his son Asamanja because he harassed the people. Yayati chose his younger son Puru, putting aside his four elder brothers, because of Puru's nobler character, and even the royal choice needed the sanction of the people. Puru was only installed as Crown Prince with the assent of the people. The spotless Ramachandra, chosen by his father, was submitted to the assent of the people. The Brahmanas, the chiefs of the army and the citizens of the metropolis took counsel together, and agreed to the King's choice : " Speedily instal the son, endowed with noble qualities, resembling the God of Gods, ever intent upon the welfare of the whole State."

It will, of course, be said by hostile critics, that these were theories and legends. If it were so, they would shew the ideals of the people, their views of sovereignty, of the duties and the responsibilities of a King. But there is no reason to doubt the historicity of the events. Chandragupta himself succeeded to the throne in consequence of the execution of the last King of the Nanda dynasty for tyranny and incompetence, Chanakya himself being the leader of the rebellion.

The duties of King and People were, in fact, co-relative. The *Sukranti* says quite plainly that Brahma " created the King to be the servant of his subjects, and he is remunerated by a share of the produce."

And it says further: "If the King is an enemy of virtue, morality and power, and is unrighteous in conduct, the people should expel him as a destroyer of the State. And for the preservation of the State, the Purohita (Priest) should, with the consent of the people, place in his seat a member of the family who may be possessed of virtue." Chanakya lays down very fully the qualities which the King should possess.

Other forms of Government in Ancient India were oligarchical, communal, democratic. Large States, like the great Empire of Ashoka, were sub-divided into Viceroyalties and Governorships. Non-monarchical forms persisted to the 4th century A. D.

The Emperor, or King, as the case might be, was assisted in his work by a Council, varying in number. In the *Mahâbhârata* it is said that 4 Brahmanas, 8 Kshattriyas, 21 Vaishyas, 3 Shudras and 1 Suta should form the royal Council. It is interesting to note that the Vaishyas outnumbered all the rest. The "Great Council" was a larger Assembly, including subordinate Chiefs and the Nobles, such an Assembly, probably, as that gathered by Dhritirashtra before the Great War. The Royal Council, or Council of Ministers, was the smaller body which practically carried on the administration. Each member gave his opinion. Finally, if the decision were not unanimous, the opinion of the majority prevailed. "The King," says Mr. Banerjea,

“ was supposed not to do anything without the consent of his Council.”

The qualifications necessary for a Minister have been much discussed. Chanakya gives no less than seven different views of authorities bearing on this question, and remarks : “ There is an element of reasonableness in each of these opinions,” and he sensibly concludes : “ The fitness of a Minister should be considered in view of the work he is called upon to undertake.”

It is interesting to find Chanakya saying that “ a Minister should never live in luxurious style,” and carrying out his own precept by living “ in an old and dilapidated hut.”

Such are a few of the details of the civilisation of his time written down by this remarkable Minister, and in many other ancient books there are statements and allusions which fit in perfectly with the descriptions given by Chanakya. It is not without significance that the Chief Minister is often a Brahmana, and is sometimes Chief Minister and Chief Priest combined, as though he typified the Law which stood above the King ; we read of the Emperor Chandragupta Maurya touching the feet of his great Minister, the Kshattriya paying homage to the Brahmana ; we read also of Chief Ministers who, with or without the Council of Ministers, elected and deposed Kings.

The general impression of India given by such a survey as is afforded by the *Arthashastra* is of a vast

country, presenting many varieties of forms of government, making many experiments, discussing with keen interest many political problems, a country throbbing with life and thought, wealthy, happy, free and prosperous. We realise that her mighty spiritual literature, her philosophy, her epics, grew out of a soil rich in civilisation, material and intellectual, as well as spiritual ; that India was a land, oldest of living Nations, whose splendid yesterday promises a to-morrow of unrivalled glory.

## WHAT INDIA IS FOR THE WORLD

IN the midst of a crisis, such as the present, every effort must be made by those who have the inner knowledge to carry through one of the greatest triumphs the world shall ever know. Today is a supreme moment in the history of the world, and those who truly know must work from every part of the world to what is a common end. Whatever you may be doing for the one you must dedicate to the all. Try to perceive the Great Plan as a whole, however much you may be concentrated upon a particular part of it. It is all one Plan, and each part is but a part, however much it may seem to be a whole, all by itself.

India is the keynote. India is the centre of that great storm which shall usher in a splendid Peace. Wherever else you may be working, remember India, think of Her, know Her to be the true Hope of the Nations of the world. Think truly about India, without the slightest trace of race or creed or colour prejudice. Drive these away, and know India as She is, as She is apart from, above, those who happen to be Her sons for awhile. They are not India. They are not the

Mother. They are but the children, among Her children. Work for India as opportunity offers. You hasten the growth of all that is dear to you as you hasten the growth of India. No true Theosophist, and certainly no one who is working for the Inner Government of the world, will be careless of India's welfare, for the sake of the people of India, but far more for the sake of all that India is, the mighty Power She is, as the veritable Holy Land of the world. Take away the people of India, and India remains. But help the people to become worthy of India.

We hear talk of apathy in India. But there is an apathy far more dangerous than that of the people generally, and it is the apathy of those who have been appointed to help and guide India. The apathy of those who know, and who have been entrusted with service which demands the most constant alertness, is infinitely more dangerous than the apathy of those who do not really know, even though many of them may think they know. The apathy of those who know destroys. The apathy of the ignorant is but an obstacle in the way. What answer can you expect to your call for unity, if there be absence of unity among yourselves—among you who know? What answer can you expect to your call for sacrifice, if there be absence of sacrifice among yourselves—among you who know? Will you not try to remember that just for this life at least you might give up living for yourselves, and lavish

your all upon the common need? Indeed you cannot offer better service to yourselves than this, though sometimes it may seem as if you are spending time upon apparently unremunerative activity, which could more profitably be spent upon yourselves individually. The more you lavish upon the common need, the greater is your claim upon the Higher Ones, and They well know how to be lavish towards those who know how to spend of their own substance in the service of others. The more intensely you strive for the Freedom of others, for the Freedom of the world, the sooner will you yourselves be numbered among the Free. You enter your own larger Self as you serve the larger Self in all. Apathy? Is there apathy in you? Is there apathy in those movements which should lead the way in enthusiasm and delighted absorption in the Great Cause they exist to serve? What comes first with you? Even if the smaller, the individual, must still dominate, shall it not dominate less, shall not the larger loom larger?

Brotherhood among yourselves, true, unclouded Brotherhood, is the need, the imperative need, to-day. And for this each one of you is individually responsible. You must establish and maintain Brotherhood in your own immediate surroundings, in every movement to which you belong. You must do this, at whatever cost to yourselves. Where you are, there must Brotherhood be. Dissension, quarrel, dispute, misunderstanding

—of these must you be rapidly intolerant. You must be impatient of them, ruthless in crushing them. It is of no importance that you may not succeed. It is supremely important that you make ceaseless effort. If you are never dismayed, never despairing, never hopeless, never discouraged, success is yours.

—(*New India*, 20 December 1928)



## SHALL INDIA REMAIN A NATION ?

### I

DURING the many millennia of India's history, she has naturally passed through many political changes, large and small. But today she is faced with a problem the solution of which is of supreme importance, for on that solution depends her future as a Nation : her life as a mighty power for good in the whole world, or the gradual diminishing of that power ; her treading of the upward path to a glory outshining the splendour of her past, or the downward path through disintegration to decay and death. And I am not sure that she does not stand today at the parting of the ways.

The successive waves of Aryan invasion from Central Asia—crossing the Himalayas and passing through Kashmir into the Land of the Five Rivers, or flowing towards the right and entering the Panjab, or passing into Sindh through its northern or western passages, or to the left through Assam into Bengal, rolled southward ever, settling down in the portions north of the Vindyas, making the first Aryavarta where the black

deer wandered, and slowly, slowly passing southwards—continued for many ages. In the north, in what became Rajputana, they met and assimilated the mighty Toltec branch of the Atlanteans, the red children of Vishnu, the warrior race, the Kings who possessed the Raja Yoga, the Kingly Science, the Kingly Secret, as we learn from the *Chhandoggyopani-shat*, inter alia, among whom the white Aryan of Kashmir became the red-brown Kshattriya Rajputs, with that richest, most splendid colour of the human skin. Later, to the South, they met the great Dravidian civilization and largely Aryanized it, though many of its distinguishing marks remain, the fundamental difference between the fairer Southerners showing the dominance of the Aryan blood, the darker the predominance of the Dravidian.

Gradually families joined together in villages in the north, and the established villages in the South continued on their ancient lines, and there appeared the aggregations in which the “village republics” with their Panchayats linked themselves up into larger Republics under Councils (Sabhas, Samitis, etc.) or into Kingdoms with their Ministers and Councils, and these, now and again, into huge Empires far-reaching, but with lives less prolonged than that of the Kingdoms, which re-emerged from Empires and swallowed up Republics. The Buddhist books shew us much of the Council Governments, among which the Lord Buddha

wandered, and which He copied in his Sangha. The tendency was to larger and larger States, though little ones were mingled with them, and the Pathan and Mughal Empires, due to Mussalman invaders, swayed the destinies of the North, the second lasting down to the ending of the East India Company, though enfeebled to the point almost of perishing by the rising of the Maratha Power. Through all the integrations and disintegrations of States there was one powerful unifying force ever at work—the Hindu religion. The recitation of the daily mantrams linked in the worshipper's mind cities, rivers and mountains of north and south, of east and west. Traditions of great Rishis, common Vedas and Purânas and epics, songs of saintly devotees, a sacred language for the daily prayers, made all Hindus one People, one Nation, permeated by one Faith. The coming of Islam weakened the sense of Nationality, but also enriched the National life when Musalmans became Indians, and not foreign invaders. But disintegrating influences wrought powerfully, sects multiplied, castes meant for mutual service became enclosures for antagonistic privileges, and the consciousness of Nationality lessened. When the East India Company came, it soon took advantage of the schisms and quarrels, allied itself with the weaker side, fought its stronger enemy, and having swallowed it, next swallowed its ally. Britain conquered by turning Indian swords against

Indians, and, having conquered, proceeded to treat them all with an enveloping contempt as "natives," and created a unity of servitude. In this atmosphere the seed of Nationality, left from the past unity, began to grow, and common humiliation generated a common sympathy. Since Bengali, Panjabi, Maratha, Madrassi, were all branded with a common inferiority, their differences almost disappeared, and they began to realize their oneness. Indian history stretched back into the past ; it did not begin with Clive and Hastings. There were battles before Plassey ; there were Maharanis before Queen Victoria ; there were Scriptures before the Bible. From their past they drank strength ; self-respect and pride awakened ; they began to feel their Nationhood ; they answered appeals to the service of India. Through the British Raj, this spring sent sap through dried-up stems, and swelling buds, that promise flower and fruit, begin to break and open. The sun of English literature warmed them ; the memory of their past watered them ; and a great longing surged through them to be again a Unity. India awoke from dreams : She sprang to her feet—a Nation. And Now ?

## II

The bird's-eye view of Indian evolution, given above, shows us a steady current, setting in the direction of

integration, now and then rushing forward and making a huge Empire, not lasting long, except in the case of the Mughal. We saw also the underlying unity, due to Hinduism, weakened by the incoming of other faiths, and then we saw how the latent disintegrating elements reasserted themselves, and how the East India Company built up a far-flung Empire, assumed by the Crown after a century of growth. Lastly, we noted the driving together of Indians perforce, and the assertion of the foreign race, which assumed to itself a superior civilization, relegating the race born in the country to a sphere of inferiority.

The Great War, and the Time Spirit generally, called to the surface the determination to be free and Self-ruling, and beginning as a prayer it has become a demand, an insistent claim. "Freedom is my birth-right, and I will have it," said Tilak, the Leader of Maharashtra, accepted as a leader of the first rank in India as a whole. No thinking Indian will consent to less than Dominion status, as regards the British Empire and the world at large, implying Home Rule, Swaraj, in all internal affairs. Some go further, and wish for complete independence, not considering how far they are able to guard their land and sea frontiers, and maintain internal unity amid the conflicts of different faiths, clashing communities, and sectarian quarrellings.

This undoing of the work of the British Rule in unifying India was begun by the Minto-Morley Reforms-

The British had utilized divisions on the principle of "Divide and Rule," had petted the Muhammadans at one time, the Sikhs at another, and had often depressed Hindus as the most numerous, and therefore the most potentially dangerous, if they began to assert themselves; but the divisions by which they profited had not been definitely acknowledged as reasons for civic and political advantages or disabilities. While encouraging them privately, they ignored them publicly, and kept up a show of impartiality and justice. This mask was thrown aside, and partiality and injustice definitely accepted as the bases of Government, in 1909, by the Minto-Morley Reforms. As the then Secretary of State for India confessed, Parliamentary Government in India was not within his vision. He was a Democrat in England, standing for equal rights; he was an anti-Democrat in India, giving advantages to one faith and penalising another. The result was the intensification of the division between the Hindu and Musalman communities; only in Indian States did they remain fairly friendly, because Hindu and Musalman Rulers ignored communal divisions. Naturally the Musalmans rejoiced in the fact that their individual voting power was double that of the Hindu, and although they agreed to renounce this extra privilege in 1916, the harm was done of making a religious belief the cause of advantage in the political field. Others had been stimulated to press the claims of their respective

faiths to special favouritism in political advantages, Sikhs, Christians, Europeans, all claimed to be given more political power than that to which their numbers entitled them. Why a white skin should count more in politics than a coloured one, it is impossible to see, since the colour of the skin does not connote greater intelligence, knowledge, or moral worth in one hue over another. The result is that the electorate is cut up into a variety of fancy divisions, unconnected with political opinions, and religious sects, castes, colours, stimulate the strife for the loaves and fishes of office, and threaten to reduce politics in India to a sordid struggle for money and place. Sunnis and Shias, Tamils and Telugus, are beginning to talk of separate representation, and the fissions may go on and on, until a number of small groups, representing petty interests, will fill the Legislatures, and all National interests will be submerged. What silliness this is. India, a Nation, is crippled while all the groups are fighting.

### III

We have already noted that the result of making separate electorates has been to intensify differences, and to drive the communities farther apart by stimulating communal interests, diverting attention from the good of the Province to the question of dividing the

loaves and fishes within the sub-divisions of the community which has the majority of representatives, so favouring further fission, and ever smaller groups.

Now, if India is to remain a Nation, she must cleanse herself from this pernicious political disease of communal electorates. They are leading her back into the abyss of jealousies, rivalries, hatreds, conflicts, with the help of which the East India Company deprived her of political freedom, drained her of her wealth, removed her from her place among the Nations, and enabled a small foreign bureaucracy to dominate her millions of once stalwart men, and fill her villages with men, women, and children, who have sticks for legs and arms, and swollen stomachs from perennial starvation. From that abyss the East India Company also pulled her out by the action of that same bureaucracy, forcing her into united action, after it had educated a class on the strong meat of a literature permeated with the spirit of freedom, and arousing her from the slumber of apathy into a determination to be once more mistress in her own house. The Spirit once awakened cannot be again hypnotized into sleep, and Britain, thank God, successfully trained a generation which had a Gokhale, a Pherozeshah Mehta, a Ranade, a Telang, a Wacha, a Tilak, an Arobindo Ghosh, a Rabindranath Tagore—space would fail me to name all who sought reincarnation in India, when English education opened the door to English Liberty,



and who came to lead the Nation to recovered Self-Rule.

I know how all the passions of man's lower nature clamour for the petty gains for one's own class, and disregard the mighty interests of the Nation. The Reforms, which gave us many good things, gave us this great curse, which may yet corrupt and destroy the whole. . . .

To enable India to remain a Nation we must work for the Nation as such, strengthen her Federal Government, free it from Whitehall, make it a Cabinet responsible to the Federal Parliament, with the Viceroy, representing the King, with his powers constitutionally exercised on the advice of his Cabinet. And for this, we have to make up our minds on the powers to be vested in the Government of India.

#### IV

The outcome of the three preceding articles is summed up in the last paragraph of article III, that India can only escape disintegration, can only remain a Nation, if we work for the Indian Nation supremely, and put her interests above all others. If the interests of a district, a municipality, a village, a community, a caste, a creed, conflict with those of the Province, the conflicting interests of the smaller must give way to the greater. So the interest of the Province must give

way to India. It is the task of statesmanship to reconcile conflicting interests, and, in the long run, the interests coincide, and create National, Provincial, Group and Individual prosperity. When the opposite policy is followed, then the National prosperity decays, and, with the decay of National prosperity, all the parts of the Nation suffer.

Our guiding principle then must be : “ Aim at the good of the whole, and aim also at the good of each that is consistent with the good of the whole.” It was stated, in opposition to the Reforms, that with the removal of the unifying pressure of Britain, religious, caste, and communal jealousies and hatred, kept down by Britain, would break out as in pre-Company days. That has proved true, and it is useless to deny the facts which stare us in the face. We must recognize them, and try to change them, otherwise India will not remain a Nation. We under-estimated this danger, although we fought against the ruinous extension of communal representation. There should be no disability and no privilege given to any particular birth, sex, class, or creed. Birth, sex, class, or creed should not disqualify anyone from the exercise of political rights, nor give him any preference at the polling booth.

We have, then, to strengthen the Central Power of the Nation, the Government of India, in the exercise of its Executive, Legislative and Judicial functions. The

Executive consists of the Viceroy as representing the King, with his Cabinet responsible to the Legislature. The Legislative consists of the Council of State and the Legislative Assembly ; there is, of course, a difference of opinion as to a uni-cameral or bi-cameral Legislature, but that is a question of detail. The Judicial consists in a Supreme Court. These will stand before the world as the Government of India, speaking in her name, voicing her will, deciding her policy. To the outer world, in all political matters, the Government of India is India, and it is ours to see that it is honoured abroad, respected and obeyed at home.

For this reason all residual powers should be vested in the Federal Government and not in the Provincial Governments ; Provincial powers should be scheduled ; all others, with all that may arise in the future, must vest in the Government of India. Subjects and heads of revenue should be entirely divided, and if at any time there is reason for changing the allotment, it should be changed by an Act of the Government of India. There should be National and Provincial Services, the National under the control of the Government of India, and composed of men and women of higher qualifications than are demanded for the Provincial. The control of the Army, the Air-Force and the Navy should lie with the Government of India, its immediate direction with the Minister of War, but its Budget to be voted by the Legislature, and its

discipline enforced by an annual Mutiny Act, so that the Executive could not use it against the will of the Nation.

There will be many questions of detail to settle, but the broad principles are clear. It is for India to decide whether she will remain a Nation, or be lost in the chaos of contending groups.

## WHAT IS SWARAJ ?

### I

I DESIRE to ask very earnest attention to the article by Babu Bhagavan Das Sahab, entitled, "What is Spiritual Political Swaraj ? " It is important, because, so far as we know, it is the first attempt to make proposals for distinctly Indian foundations for Indian Swaraj, instead of blindly following Western Democracy. I am profoundly convinced, as I urged on Labour in Australia in 1908, that the method of creating a Government by counting heads, without any regard for their contents, can never lead to success. As the suffrage proceeds downwards—without imposing any limitations either on ignorance, or on the questions submitted to that ignorance for decision—the quality of the members elected to the Central Parliament of a country has become more and more mediocre, has formed more and more a party following blindly a small group of men, until, in the last British Parliament, nominally Democratic, the Cabinet formed a dominant Oligarchy, uncontrolled by the members, and indifferent to their

views—if they had any. This defect is not wholly absent from the valuable paper, on which I write, for in extending the franchise to all heads of households, he remarks on the possible election of a Village Elder—presumably to a Parliament, Provincial or even Federal :

An aged agriculturist who has tilled his few acres successfully, has raised up a good family, is respected and trusted in his own and neighbouring villages, and can express his views clearly, is a wise Village Elder, in short, may be a more useful member of a legislature which has to deal with vast agricultural interests like those of India, even though he may be unable to sign his name, than many brilliant speakers or writers with only a college education that has little touch of reality.

But would such a man, invaluable on a Village, Taluq, or perhaps even on a District Panchayat, be able to deal with questions affecting economic matters over the whole of India even in agriculture, to say nothing of other non-agricultural questions, vital to National prosperity? The college education may not be well devised, but at least it puts into the hands of its alumni the tools for gaining knowledge, some acquirements also in history, philosophy, logic, and, above all, a trained brain, which can be applied to new conditions; and a widened outlook on men and things.

Let us, for a moment, consider Australia, where the majority rule, and "the majority" necessarily means manual labourers. Labour ruled, and the ignorant proved to be, as ignorance must be, shortsighted. They drove up wages and shortened hours. Pioneers, with strenuous work and many sacrifices, had cleared the land of forest, and had made it arable, or laid down pasture. Labour, living mostly in towns, knew little and cared less, about the huge estates for raising sheep and growing grain. Wages became impossibly high for agricultural labourers. Farmers could not pay them. They were compelled to let some of their cleared land be again overgrown by forest, and the whole country suffered. Labour did not intend this result. It was merely shortsighted. Trying to improve the near, it ruined the far.

Will it not, then, be necessary to construct a Local Government, broadbased on universal adult suffrage in the 720,000 villages in India, and giving a number of qualifications—of which one would admit to the next higher franchise over a large area—so that, as a person grows in knowledge, capacity, character, he (including she) should exercise a wider suffrage with added power? This seems to be a necessary corollary to the conceptions put forward by our essayist.

Mr. Bhagavan Das lays his foundation on a bedrock : in the individual there exist a higher and a lower self ; in the Nation, which is an individual of a higher order,

there also exist a higher and lower self. The welfare of each of these individuals depends on the higher self dominating the lower.

As the "I" of every individual is divided into a higher and a lower self, so is the "We" of every community. Every such group has also a higher self and a lower, a better and a worse, a more virtuous and a more vicious, a wiser and a more foolish. The outstandingly good and wise men and women in a community, those who have achieved *individual spiritual swaraj*, make up its higher self; the comparatively bad and ignorant, its lower self.

In the Self-Government of a community, as in that of an individual, if the higher self legislates and rules, then only have we true Self-Government; then only have we wise and beneficent administration, which takes into account the just needs of every limb and organ of the body politic, and ministers to each such need in proper proportion, so that the health of the whole is maintained, and the total social organism enjoys peace, prosperity, and happiness. When spiritual-minded persons legislate and rule, then individual spiritual swaraj becomes the foundation of communal or political spiritual Swaraj. . . . But where the lower self of the people, its selfish, cunning, scheming, pushful, hypocritical, avaricious, arrogant element manages to get itself elected, and seizes hold of power, and so class-interest or



personal interest overpowers communal, philanthropic, humanist interest ; where " private " spirit suppresses " public " spirit . . . there the organism will inevitably suffer from fevered unrest and dire disease ; and if the only right remedy is not soon applied, disruption of the communal as of the individual organism will follow, sooner or later, according to the virulence of the disease.

What is needed is, if I may quote words of my own often used since 1908 : " Democracy is groping after a way in which it may discover its best men, and place them in the seats of power." Can India find such a way ? If so, she will set an example to the world, and the happiness of her people will make other Nations eager to copy it.

Mr. Bhagavan Das urges that people shall address themselves to hard thinking in relation to Swaraj. He says, very truly :

Most people seem very averse to this thinking out precisely of the fundamental nature and principles of that form of Swaraj which will be our special remedy. They say the discussion is unpractical and will fritter away energy which is wanted for other and more important works. Yet there is no other work at all before the country, which is more important and more urgent than this—of getting a clear idea of the goal that we are shouting for, and of the roads that will lead to it, so that we may not

run blindly in wrong directions. People do not realise that only that activity is practical which leads towards a well-understood as well as much desired goal by well-understood and appropriate means ; and that all other moving about of hand and foot and tongue and pen, however energetic, is utterly unpractical. Hard thinking is probably a more painful process than muscular action, for the majority of us.

Nothing is more unpracticable than the hand-to-mouth remedies characteristic of western legislation. A measure is passed to remove one grievance and creates two fresh ones. Time is saved, not lost, by well-considered measures, and the day after has to be thought of as well as the immediate need. " The widespread education of public opinion, then, as to the nature of true Swaraj is absolutely indispensable." We shall next consider the proposed qualifications of legislators.

## II

We have now to consider the qualifications which Babu Bhagavan Das Sahab desires to see in legislators, and it is on this point that most discussion will probably arise. The aim is to enable Democracy to find its best men and to make them the law-givers of the people, so that the wisdom of the legislator shall

secure the happiness of the people. I may suggest that this cannot be separated from the franchise and from the franchise area. The ascertainment of the worthiness of the chosen legislator must imply a knowledge of the persons to be designated as fit and proper persons. Our writer is, however, admittedly laying down fundamental principles which he hopes to see discussed. If these are accepted, then will come the application of them in detail, so as to render them practicable over the huge extent of India, with its vast population, and its immense preponderance of villages over towns of any considerable size. As some 500,000 villages out of the 720,000 have populations of only 500 or less, the number of electors in each village will be small, and the knowledge of the electors of conditions outside their villages will be limited. The self-rule of the village is vital for the independence of the people, else they will submit too easily where they are tenants to the dictation of land-owners.

The securing of such legislators is the very crux of all political science and art. Western countries have been trying for the last hundred and fifty years. But the methods and rules of election, etc., devised by the current western forms of Government, have all failed disastrously and admittedly (*vide Bryce's Modern Democracies*). The masses of the people seem to be no more happy, in some cases are perhaps even more miserable, than the masses in India—and this,

despite the adventitious fact that while "self-governed" within their own proper countries, they are very much "other governing" outside, and exploit and drain and subject to systematic and organised and "lawful" plunder the vast countries and immense populations of weaker nations. The internal ferments and the external wars in and between these western self-governing countries are patent proofs of the failure of their forms of Self-Government. None of these forms is suitable for India, *because of the radical defect* that in none of them is care taken to ensure that the *higher* self should govern, the self that is *ethically* as well as intellectually fit. To copy any of these blindly would be the very climax of slave-mentality for us. We have to think out our own methods and rules of election, whereby we may make humanly probable—for certainty is obviously impossible in human affairs—that men and women of the right qualifications may be elected to the legislature.

There can be no doubt as to the unhappiness in western countries. It is but seldom that peaceful happy faces are seen among the huge aggregations of the poor found in western cities. It has been sarcastically said that "as Liberty has increased, Happiness has diminished." When England was unfree, it was called "merrie England," and certainly no one would employ that adjective in describing the England of our own

day. But Liberty and Happiness will again be found united, though in the long course of evolution, Liberty—a solid gain and necessary for human development—be temporarily bought with the price of unhappiness. The happiness of cows or pigs is not desirable for man.

1. The first qualification for the legislators, as laid down by Mr. Bhagavan Das, is that they shall be permanent residents in the country for which they are to legislate, and that creed, caste, class, colour, race or sex should neither be a qualification nor a disqualification. I do not feel sure that “permanent” residence is necessary. A voter should not be a “bird of passage” certainly, but should a man who spends his life here, say for forty years, have no voice in the laws he is bound to obey? This is a matter which needs careful consideration; personally, I do not feel sure.

2. There must be no canvassing and no offering of himself by a man as a candidate for election. The electors are placing on the legislator “a heavy burden of public work,” and it is, therefore, they who are to be placed under obligation. This is closely connected with the ancient Hindu idea that the rewards in human life should be distributed according to the nature and desires of the man whose work is to be rewarded. All the rewards which recompense work should not be heaped on one individual type, but should be distributed in a way congruous to the ambition of the worker.

As Lord Haldane lately pointed out, money is not the only reward sought after by human effort. Much of western discontent is due to the fact that all the rewards—power, honour, wealth, pleasure-giving objects—are heaped on one man, while those who turn raw materials into wealth and pleasure-giving objects have the smallest share of these, and none of the other “prizes of life.” If a man is given power, why should he be also paid a large income? If honour or fame be the reward he desires, why in addition wealth or pleasure-giving objects? A predominance of the one he most longs for should be his main reward, and a sufficiency of the three others for an un-anxious and happy life should be the lot of each. We may add that, if a man seeks to be a legislator with an ulterior motive of physical advantages for himself, instead of the desire to do service, or even to win honour among his fellows by service, then he will naturally canvass and struggle for his election. To eliminate these will tend to increase the patriotism and the desire to serve, which should be among the qualifications of the legislature.

3. Those chosen as fit or proper persons to be elected should be, ordinarily, of 40 years of age or more, parents with experience of household life, and should have retired from competitive bread-winning or money-making. They should either be living on their own savings, or on pensions. Our writer thinks they

are in the position of trustees, and should not receive any remuneration for their personal use :

So, he would feel financially independent ; his outlook upon life, his attitude towards his fellow-beings, would have changed from that of selfish taking to that of unselfish giving ; and he would have all the leisure needed for his public duties. Yet more. He should have done outstandingly good work in some walk of life—whether literary, scientific, educational, priestly, medical, artistic, etc., or administrative, official, military, etc., or commercial, agricultural, industrial, financial, etc., or as a labourer and manual worker ; and he should have done this and at the same time acquired reputation for uprightness and honest dealing and sympathy for fellow-creatures.

Payment of members is a new thing, and was adopted in the West in order to facilitate the entry of Labour leaders into Parliament. As our writer says, Aldermen are not paid, nor Justices of the Peace. But the old idea of the duty of the citizen to serve the State has been dying out with the prevalence of the commercial spirit. Honour is the right reward of the legislator :

Trust, honour, reverence—these are the proper, the only, and the natural price of patriarchal benevolence and caring ; and they usually are paid, where the generous instincts and traditions of the community have not been perverted. Also, the giving and receiving of such honour—a reward greater than

power and wealth and amusements, for it can be enjoyed not only in life, but also after the death of the physical body, which the others cannot be—is a great nourishment to the heart of both giver and receiver, and is a continuous inducement to benevolent work on the part of the latter (“when it is not mixed up with and corrupted by power and wealth”), and a powerful check against temptation to corruption. The natural corollary of this is that in all public functions, the unsalaried legislator should have rank and precedence above all salaried office-bearers, as well as above all persons engaged in competitive money-earning professions.

4. No legislator should have executive power ; the Legislature should control and direct the Executive, and the Executive should be responsible to the Legislature. Mr. Bhagavan Das writes :

This is the very essence of Responsible Government and Self-Government as conceived here. Where the chief executive and the chief legislative are practically identical, and the members of the former are substantially or heavily salaried, as in England, true responsibility ceases, manoeuvres and intrigue of party-politics become rampant, and legislation cannot be disinterested. In other places, the opposite error is observable, viz., that if the Legislative is separated from the Executive, the latter is free of control by the former.



This is a return to the idea of ancient India, of Aristotle and of Montesquieu. The latter goes so far as to say that where the two are blended, there is no Liberty.

Babu Sahab, however, does not add the third element of Government, as necessary as the other two—the Judicial. This omission should be rectified when, as we hope, the article is issued as a pamphlet,

I may add one other suggestion. Is it not probable that a Legislature, composed of middle-aged men only, might lack vigour and new ideas? Would it be in sympathy with the younger generation, its sons and daughters, who are carrying on the work of the world? How would it be if, in addition to the Elders, the legislators, there were also a House whose power might be limited to the passing of Resolutions, “projects of law,” which might be taken up, discussed, and if approved, be formulated into Bills, and passed into Acts? I grant to the full the need for sober, impartial, wise judgment in the members of the Legislature, but I have some fear of shutting out the enthusiasm, the new ideas, the vigorous capacity and virility of the men between thirty and forty, especially in India, where men think themselves old at forty.

Anyhow, the paper, to my mind, is full of good suggestions, and I very earnestly hope that they will be fully discussed, and will not be forgotten, but worked out in detail.

—(*New India*, 27 November, 1922).

## STEPS TO FREEDOM

THE earliest Indian initiative in the direction of action for political freedom was, so far as I know, in 1876, in a Calcutta Society organized by Surendranath Bannerji. In 1885 came the first National Congress, and in that the National aspirations were focussed and systematized for thirty years, the plan adopted being that of gradual advance by successive reforms. All honour to the noble pioneers, who, through those long years, fought for a platform from which the political leaders could put forward India's claims. How splendidly their starry names shine out in the darkness, "lighting the way to her shrine," the shrine of the Liberty of India! In the thirtieth Congress, held in Madras, in 1914, a new departure was taken, the claim for Dominion Self-Government instead of for separate reforms.

Let us, then, consider that which lies behind us, glancing back over the salient points in the crowded hurry of events in the last seven and a half years. In June, 1914, in Queen's Hall, London, with Earl Brassey in the Chair, I had the privilege—knowing the mind of India by my life in India in close association, since 1893,

with educated India—of putting her claims before a great British audience, summing it up by saying that India's loyalty was not blind but intelligent, and that "the price of India's loyalty was India's Freedom." That was the first definite step, marking a new departure.

A little more than a month later, the Great War broke out, when Britain flung her sword into the scale in defence of a small Nation whose liberty was guaranteed by her signature, threw her "contemptible little army" across the path of the overwhelming German hosts, who boasted they would dine in Paris in a fortnight, and barred their way to the fair City, the heart of France. Fighting desperately every inch of ground, her men were forced back by that tremendous tide, and she sent ringing out over her Empire her lion's roar, and called for help to all her far-flung realm. India alone had borne for years the crushing weight of a powerful Army kept at war strength, and alone was ready to respond in time, and Lord Hardinge, with her people's loud acclaim, stripped her of troops, and flung them overseas, and at the last moment, rushing across France, her cavalry galloped to the fighting front of the exhausted British line, "with scarce strength left to cheer them," it was written, and charged and checked the grey hosts of Germany. Can any forget the passion of gratitude in the British Parliament when the news came of India's swift and gallant answer to Britain's loud-blown conch?

The words of British statesmen, of Asquith and Lloyd George, stirred Indian blood. This was a fight against autocracy, this a war for Liberty, this a combat that no nation should henceforth dominate over another nation, but that every nation should be free. India caught up the cry, poured out her men, poured out her money, manufactured munitions, wove khaki, manned hospital ships ; the news of Liberty's War went through all her villages, awoke her masses, sent her sons abroad in hundreds of thousands ; widows and orphans paid the price, for India too was to be free. " Strike while the iron is hot," cried a great English newspaper to the Dominions, and India in her Congress of Christmas, 1914, registered her claim to equality of status with the Self-Governing Dominions, in the Reconstruction " after the War." That was the second step, marking the *time* for the new departure, and the President, Mr. Bhupendranath Basu, declared in ringing words the claim of India. The period of " boons " was over. The period of claiming Rights was here.

In 1915, the definite educative propaganda for that clearly visioned Home Rule began—the word Home Rule being chosen because it meant autonomy *within the Empire*. That propaganda saved India to the Empire, as the first enthusiasm died down, especially in the great recruiting ground of the Punjab, under Sir Michael O'Dwyer's tyranny, and Sir Reginald Craddock's dread of

Indian Freedom. The Congress of 1915, led by Satyendra Sinha, as President, bade its Committees prepare a Scheme leading towards Self-Government. The Congress and Muslim League of 1916 accepted it, and ordered an educative propaganda for its popularization. Lord Pentland strengthened the movement by putting *New India*, its organ, under security on June 5, 1916, forfeiting the security and imposing another of Rs. 10,000, on August 28, 1916, declaring that Home Rule must be put out of mind in 1917, and, on June 16, 1917, interning three of its leaders, B. P. Wadia, G. S. Arundale and myself, who had continued to press it on public attention in press and on platform. But there were other leaders outside, notably C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar, who sprang to the front, and kept the movement strictly within constitutional limits, while the agitation grew in strength, and the vernacular propaganda completed the awakening which the recruiting had begun. As Mr. Gandhi later said : " Home Rule became a mantram in every cottage." *New India* was only suspended for three days, June 18 to 20, and reappeared on June 21, my three presses having been sold in the interval. Mr. P. K. Telang became Editor, and a third security was imposed, forfeited, and a fourth of Rs. 10,000 imposed. Throughout, no resistance was offered, but law was revered, and order was unbroken, and a great constitutional triumph was achieved. Responsible Government was

proclaimed as Britain's goal in India on August 20, 1917; the internees were set free; Mr. Montagu came to India; I was elected President of the Congress of 1917, and formulated the demand for Home Rule, suggesting five or ten years for the transition, and the Congress said "at an early date." Then came the Montagu-Chelmsford proposals, considered incomplete but capable of expansion. So as to make a substantial step forward, Mr. Tilak would take a four-anna reform, and use it to gain the rupee. I endorsed the view, and a few, in the spring of 1918, began to clamour against this reasonable attitude. The Special Congress at Bombay in the summer, 1918, declared the proposals of Reform to be "inadequate, unsatisfactory and disappointing," but suggested a widening, law and police to be left as reserved subjects, and some responsibility to be introduced into the Central Government. This was agreed to by Moderates and Extremists alike after long debate.

Up to this point the advance had been united; once, 1907, there had been a split, but that had been closed at the Congress of 1915, following the wish of the beloved leader who had passed away, Gopal Krishna Gokhale. But at the Congress of 1918, as already pointed out, the compact reached at the Special Congress of the same year was broken—only a tiny minority of six stood by it—and thenceforth, after some preliminary skirmishing outside the

Congress, the paths diverged, one leading to Revolution, the other to Freedom. In London, in 1919, the Deputations of Moderates, All-India Home Rule League and National Home Rule League worked together for widening the Reform Act, while the Congress Deputation put forward the demands of the 1918 Congress, as it was bound to do. The National Home Rule League was much strengthened for British work by the existing Home Rule for India (Auxiliary) League, and the formation of the Indian Parliamentary Committee. The Congress Deputation first remodelled the British Committee on the new lines, and later on that Committee was destroyed by the Congress, so that it has no representation in Great Britain. The National Home Rule League carried on a vigorous propaganda in the Press and on the platform, and when the work on the Reform Bill was over, deluged India with leaflets, in English and in the vernaculars, explaining the Act. The Amritsar Congress in 1919 was the last attended by the representatives of the Liberal and National Home Rule Leagues. I had myself separated from Mr. Gandhi when he proposed and

disobedience in the spring of 1919 in a non-violent way, selling pamphlets without a printer's name. But his hartals having led to violence, he abandoned his campaign, confessing his miscalculation.

In 1920, the real fight began between Reformers and Revolutionaries, and it has been raging ever since.

with ever-increasing vigour. At first few saw the danger, and as Sir William Vincent pointed out in 1921, the brunt of the fighting against the Non-Co-operation movement fell on Mr. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri and myself, probably because we foresaw, more fully than others, the inevitable dangers of the downward path to anarchy. Through 1920, the tyranny of the N.-C.-O.s increased ; our meetings were broken up, a campaign of incredible bitterness was carried on by the neo-Nationalist party in a vigorous press campaign and innumerable meetings. The result was to close up the ranks of the Reformers, and the Liberal Leagues and the National Home Rule League drew together for the elections, helping each other's candidates.

Home Rulers and Liberals are generally found working together in the Councils, as is natural, for the Liberal Federation inherits the glorious traditions of the Old Congress, which the original Home Rule League supported, and has put itself into the front line of progress by adding the attainment of Responsible Government as quickly as possible, while the New Congress with its new creed and constitution broke away at Nagpur ; the National Home Rule League has the old objects, without support of the New Congress, while the original Home Rule League became the Swarajya League, with entirely new objects and with Mr. Gandhi at its head. . . .



During this first year of Council work, Mr. Tilak's ideal of Responsive Co-operation has been thoroughly carried-out, and had it not been for the N.-C.-O. movement, all the Emergency Legislation and the Press Act would ere now have been repealed, and India would be free. As it is, the unexampled violence of speech and action in the revolutionary movement has for the most part been met by the ordinary law, and the Bills to amend the Criminal Procedure Code and the Indian Penal Code are before Committees. The Seditious Meetings Act and Part II of the Criminal Amendment Act were prolonged by the Committee because of the unrest, and these were only put into force when actual danger of violence was present, and the N.-C.-O. tyranny had become intolerable. These are the Councils which some have the impertinence to call a farce. . . .

A Committee is now being formed and will be shortly announced, which will explore the further possibilities under the Reform Act, and investigate the methods of bringing about Provincial Autonomy and Responsibility in the Indian Government. Although political activity has been lessened by the revolutionary movement, it has not been destroyed, and the gains already made have roused envy in the revolutionary camp, many of its leaders being eager to enter the Councils. The duty of Reformers now is to work out the road yet to be travelled in order to gain Home

Rule, and to encourage in every possible way the enrolment of Territorial soldiers, remembering the fact I have so often urged, that Home Defence must accompany Home Rule.

With full confidence that by Co-operation and United Action we can finish the work so well begun, and win Freedom for the Motherland, let us all stiffen our resolution to save the country from anarchy by supporting whole-heartedly the Indo-British Governments in protecting peaceable citizens and putting down disorder, realising that in proportion as we strengthen their authority, give them our moral and material support, and maintain respect for Law, we are helping them to use as little force as is possible for the preservation of liberty ; whereas, if we are supine, and hang back as cowards from the support that the King's Government have the right to demand, we shall compel that Government, against their will, to use physical means alone to crush the Revolution, and to save the country from anarchy.

—(*New India*, 27 January 1922).

## A GREAT OPPORTUNITY

NOW and again, in the history of Nations, a great opportunity is offered by the Divine Providence that rules the world, and as that opportunity is grasped or missed, so is the upward or downward path followed by the Nation or the individual concerned. When the great struggle against slavery began in the United States of America, men like William Lloyd Garrison and Wendell Phillips were execrated by their countrymen ; but their names are now written in gold in the Nation's Roll of Honour. As Lowell wrote :

Once to every man and Nation comes the moment  
to decide,

In the strife 'twixt Truth and Falsehood, for the  
good or evil side,

Some great Cause, God's new Messiah, offering  
each the bloom or blight,

Parts the goats upon the left hand and the sheep  
upon the right,

And the choice goes by for ever, 'twixt that dark-  
ness and that light.

In that great struggle for Liberty, for Home Rule, that has begun in India, such opportunities come to those who are the leaders of the Nation. Not when the battle is over and victory is assured, but when the hosts are drawn up, ere the flight of arrows begins, then comes the thunder of Shri Krishna's chariot, and the white horses of the Divine Charioteer, galloping into the empty space, are suddenly arrested, and Arjuna, facing friends and teachers, relatives and friends, revered elders and beloved playmates, hesitates and lets fall his bow : " I will not fight, O Govinda ! " Then rings out the voice, sweet as the lute, forceful as the thunder : " Whence hath this dejection befallen thee in this perilous strait, un-aryan, heaven-closing, infamous, O Arjuna ! Yield not to impotence, O Partha ! it doth not befit thee. Shake off this paltry faint-heartedness ! Stand up, O Conqueror of foes ! "

It is natural, it is human, that when the opportunity comes to make a stand for Liberty, the Arjunas of the Nation should hesitate, and listen to the voices of timidity and of time-serving. The power to be opposed has so many good things to give ; honours, a show of power, places, wealth—all these are bribes deftly offered. On the other side are the frowns of Governors, the risks of failure, the coldness of the powerful, the shutting of the avenues of success ; but there

stands Liberty, Liberty thorn-crowned, scourged, with empty hands.

Saying to each of us : Son,  
Silver and gold have I none ;  
I give but the love of all Nations,  
And the life of my people of old.

But unless all history lies, it is the choice of Liberty that immortalises, that proves to be the way to happiness and to glory.

Such a moment has come to us in India—thanks be to God for it. The people have chosen already, and their cry is ringing through the land. What will the leaders do? Will all step forth and lead, or will some hesitate and fall back? The right of Free Speech is assailed; the right of constitutional law-abiding agitation is denied. It can be saved by a bold rally round the newspaper which good karma has made the standard-bearer. If faint-heartedness prevail, the standard-bearer will go down, and other brave soldiers of Liberty will fall, one after the other; too late, when the Indian Press is dead, those who might have saved it will lament their cowardice, and will see the ranks of their countrymen sweeping on to Freedom, while they are left behind, mere milestones, on the road. For God and the Future are with us, and victory is sure.

To be chosen to bear the standard is the good karma which grows out of a life that has never shrunk from

sacrifice for Freedom's sake. Turned out of my home because I would not pretend to believe in a Christianity which I had rejected ; winning my way on press and platform as a soldier of political liberty ; fighting beside Charles Bradlaugh for the right to Free Speech and Free Thought, and then for the right to Free Discussion on social matters ; fighting beside him for his right to the seat he had won ; fighting for decent life for match-girls, for dockers, for the unskilled and helpless, for Free Speech again in the last great London struggle ; fighting against the treatment of India, the invasion of Afghanistan, the theft of Egypt ; for Ireland in the early dangerous days when Home Rule was the " march to the dismemberment of the Empire through rapine," for Internationalism and Socialism in France, in Holland, in Britain—I have won the right to fight again in the van for Free Speech in India.

I am not wont to boast of my past, nor to claim to lead when the way is easy ; but in the day of peril, when Liberty, my life's mistress, calls, I claim my place in the front of the struggle. The old love for me in England is still mine ; I tested it when last in England I spoke on India's wrongs, and it rang true and earnest as of yore. " Materialised Mystic " as I am, I believe that God has given me this glorious struggle for India for the last of this life's efforts, and that none can prevent this beloved Motherland from winning the Home Rule that he has awarded to her as her Right.

Who, among leaders, will come forward now, and speak for God and Country? Some have already sprung to the front. Is there even one who will hold back?

—(*New India*, 7 June 1916).

## INDIA'S GREATEST DANGER

WITH the growing freedom of India is arising again the danger which aforetime led to the gradual building of an Empire at the hands of the East India Company. That danger was the local rivalries between Raja and Raja, Nawab and Nawab, and Raja and Nawab. The East India Company's policy, as has been often pointed out, was to side with the weaker in such struggles, to crush the stronger, and having got rid of him to proceed to eat up the weaker. One good to India grew out of the development of the Paramount Power, the Crown of Britain; it took the place of the great successive Empires which India had known in the past, enthroning itself over the land as a whole, and thus, for a time, imposing peace, and reawakening the sense of India as a whole, of a common Nationhood. In the early local struggles, this common Nationhood had rested on the foundation of a common religion, which overbore the yet earlier dividing lines of Fourth-Race civilizations. The successive waves of conquest of the Aryans, from their home in Central and Northern Asia—the last of which took place in B.C. 9000,



caused by the great earthquakes accompanying the sinking of the island of Poseidonis—had gradually advanced the dominion of the Aryans, spreading ever southwards. In the North of India they drove the Kolarians into the hills, the remnants of Lemurian races, and intermarried with the highly civilized Toltec race, giving rise to the splendid red-brown warrior peoples, which became more and more Aryanized as the abstention from further intermarriage was accepted to preserve the Aryan type from becoming submerged; Hinduism was at that time a proselytizing religion, and while welcoming into its ranks the civilized red people, it absorbed from them their greatest religious treasures, as we see in the *Chandogyopanishat* (v. iii) where Gautama, the son of Aruni, seeks the hereditary secrets of the royal Jaivali. Spreading still further southwards, it Aryanized the great Dravidian peoples, the Brahmanas alone abstaining from inter-marriage with the Dravidians and becoming the priestly class. The Aryan religion in the South as in the North became the Nation-creating power, including in its daily worship the sacred cities of the South as well as the North, and thus giving rise to the recognition of Bharatavarsha as one, as is well shown in Radhakumund Mukerji's *Fundamental Unity of India*. The Oneness recognized and nourished by the daily worship was further strengthened by the custom of pilgrimages, the sacred places being visited between

Badarikedarnath in the North and Rameshvaram in the South, between Puri in the East and Dvaraka in the West. All this, during thousands of years, built up a Nation on the basis of a religion which shaped the broad outline of its polity, allowing for many divergencies in social customs according to local traditions. From time to time a loose political unity was also brought about, in which local sovereigns acknowledged a Lord Paramount by the famous Horse Sacrifice, the last of which was performed by the Emperor Adityasena, of the Gupta dynasty, in the seventh century A.D. The admirable system of Local Government, with the Village as the unit, and the grouping of Villages over larger and larger areas into either Republics governed by Councils, or Kingdoms governed by Monarchs with their Ministers, preserved the life and prosperity of the Nation, so that it survived local invasions and forays, remaining ever wealthy, and engaging in trade and commerce. Local rivalries among Indian Monarchs were fought out by the Monarchs and their armies, but all respected the Villages with their agriculture and their industries, for the very common sense reason that fighting was the business of the warrior caste, and not of the trader or the producer, on whom the creation and distribution of wealth depended, whoever might win in the fighting. The rivals had no mind to kill the geese who laid the golden eggs. They were all united by religion,

and, as said, temporarily by huge Empires with a nominal Suzerain.

The first great blow to the unity came from the setting up of successive Muslim Empires of the North, seated at Delhi, and spreading more or less by local conquests. These made the great religious rift in Bharatavarsha, when the Pathans and later the Mughals ruled where the Pandus had for ages held their throne. Gradually these invaders also were assimilated and became Indians, and that fine flower of Islam, Akbar the Great, dreamed of the welding of the two races into one. When the Islamic rule from Delhi was falling into pieces under the blows of the Maratha Confederation, England triumphed over her trade rival, and the East India Company gradually made its way to imperial power.

Now that, after thirty-seven years of constitutional struggle for freedom, India has won the Reform Act of 1919—which gives much power and by which we shall win Home Rule—there is arising anew the old tendency to disintegration, that enabled that East India Company to acquire rule over India, and this is the greatest danger which threatens India to-day. Hindu and Muslim had been drawn together into a political union by the patient work of patriots belonging to both great religions. On the Congress Platform in Lucknow, in 1916, Tilak, the leader of the Marathas and Madan Mohan Malaviya the up-country Pandit,

together stood side by side with Muslim leaders from Lucknow and Delhi, and Hindus and Muslims made a political compact, carried on into the Reform Act of 1919. For the first time the *Vedas* and *Al Quran* spoke as a United India, together claimed Self-Rule, and marked out the first step thereto.

Since then has been revived the old Muslim fanaticism, which declares itself Islamic more than Indian and which places its centre outside India. The fair peace that had been made was broken, and Hindu India threatened with subjection to the Musalman.

Outside this, other disintegrating movements have arisen. The non-Brahmana movement in Madras, that might have been a useful uplifting power, developed into an anti-Brahmana persecution, so that the younger Brahmanas are seeking to find in other Provinces the equality and opportunities of livelihood denied to them in the Province of their birth. The outcaste population is levelling against the non-Brahmana Hindu the same weapons as the latter used against the Brahmanas. As the Telugu non-Brahmanas have monopolised the highest offices in the new Government, the Tamils are beginning to revolt against them, and so a new split is to be seen in the non-Brahmana party itself. Away from the Madras Presidency, we see the same centrifugal forces at work in the other Provinces. Calcutta complains of the "foreign" influx, the "foreigners" being people of neighbouring Provinces, Biharis object

to the Bengalis, as do the United Provinces. We were in a fair way to substitute "Indian" for Provincial names, when this individualistic wave swept over India, the common Motherland, and it is now dashing her to pieces. Hatred is always a disintegrating force, and the hatred of the English, fostered and spread by the N.-C.-O. movement is tearing that movement into pieces. The hatred of the "foreigner" has become hatred of a man born outside the Province, and the attempt to link Hindu and Muslim together by a common hatred of the Englishman has failed by the eruption of the older hatred between the two religions. The hatred of the Liberals and the National Home Rulers, encouraged by the heaping upon them of constant vituperation by the N.-C.-O.s, has left the latter wearied and inert, except in the continued violence of their Press, and now not only are Moderates "traitors" to their country, but those who do not wear khaddar and weave it out of home-spun yarn are treated to the same ugly epithet, though one may doubt if the editors and writers of the N.-C.-O. Press carry out their own prescriptions of several hours weaving per day. This Press has become so accustomed to terrorise by assuming to speak in the name of the country, that it now assumes the same tone to members of its own party, who still dare to claim, from their old Liberal instincts, some rights of independent thought, judgment and action.

It is the duty of all who would win Home Rule by constitutional means in the shortest possible time to unite with all who aim at achieving the same goal by the same means, ignoring minor differences. We must resist the disintegrating influences which lay stress on the unessentials instead of the essentials, on minor differences instead of on major agreements. Home Rule means Provincial Autonomy and full Responsible Government in the Central Legislature. On that we are all agreed. Let us then discuss the best methods of realizing our aim. Let us magnify our great agreement, and minimize our differences.

—(*New India*, 30 June 1922).

## INDEPENDENCE

SOMETIMES I have said, when a spectator of the light-hearted way in which some gatherings of the "Congress left wing" dispose of big questions, that I am "serious in my politics," and I feel this very strongly when I am in a minority of one in a meeting of the All-India Congress Committee. The position is quite a comfortable one, even though the absence of a seconder prevents any real discussion. The seconder of my amendment—to delete the words that India could not have freedom till the British connection was severed—arrived only on the following morning in the person of Pandit Malaviya, and Dr. Ansari, quite rightly, ruled him out of order. As there was no seconder, one may assume that the 70 odd members who were present out of the 350 of the Committee, were all agreed. The Congress passed a resolution that the goal of India is Independence, and that is obvious. No one can suppose that India is to be for ever a subject Nation, under the little Island in the North Sea of Europe. Dominion Status would place India in a position of equality in the Commonwealth of Free Nations linked together by the British Crown.

India can only become independent by a conspiracy—which would be betrayed—to enter into treaties with Asiatic Nations to support an armed insurrection. Is the “left wing” of the Congress prepared to enter into such a conspiracy? I think not, but if not, why pass a resolution for the immediate Independence of which they now talk? The independence or the subjection of a nation is not one of the minor questions in politics. It is very much *the* major. I stand for Dominion Status because it makes India independent within her own territory, gives her control of the Army and of her (potential) Navy. Then she can take Independence whenever she wishes to have it.

In the absence of this, the cry for “immediate Independence” and the public formation of Independence Leagues is the preparation for either a non-violent or a violent insurrection. To me, Independence is India's inevitable destiny. The first step to it is Dominion Status, Home Rule. For that, I helped to frame the Commonwealth of India Bill, which has been in the House of Commons since 1925. The All-Parties Conference Bill, when drafted by a Parliamentary draftsman, will take its place. Those who believe in this method are working for it, and therefore, implicitly, are carrying on a campaign against immediate Independence. (The word immediate is not in the Congress resolution.)



Now, I protest against this exaggeration of the Congress resolution. Independence is too sacred and splendid a thing to be disregarded by professions unsupported by action. Mazzini passed weary years in exile for the Independence of Italy. O'Brien wore out years in penal servitude for the Independence of Ireland. What right have these, who sacrifice nothing, who risk nothing, to prostitute this glorious Ideal, sanctified by suffering, immortalized by death?

Let us at least be honest, honest with ourselves, honest with others. I say frankly that the great Rishi, who is the Regent of India in the Inner Government of the world, has laid down, as the policy to be followed, the Freedom of India within the Federation of Free Nations linked by the British Crown. The two countries can do more for the world in union than in separation. And the good of the world is the supreme object. Incidentally and inevitably the good of India is thereby secured.

—(*New India*, 15 November 1928).

## WHO WILL STAND FOR INDIA'S IMMEDIATE FREEDOM ?

"TANGLED is the path of action," says that scripture of the Karma-Yogi, the *Bhagavad Gita*. And then we find also the encouraging sentence : "Yoga is skill in action." The tangle at present is due to the fact that the political parties in the country have changed their respective policies, while they keep their old names. Hence arises the question for all serious politicians : What is my bedrock principle ? Under what name is it found in the present political turmoil ?

I have no difficulty in stating my bedrock principle as regards the relationship between Britain and India : it is what is known as Dominion Status. Dominion Status means complete Self-Government from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin, from Dwarka to Puri ; that is, from her northern boundary to her southern, from her eastern boundary to her western. Within those boundaries, there is to be no foreign rule : India is to be an equal partner in the Federation of Free Nations, linked together only by the Crown of

a constitutional Monarch, "who reigns but does not govern." It places India on a footing of perfect equality with Britain and the other self-governing Dominions, with her own Army and her own Navy under her own control. I hold, with Deshabandu C. R. Das that this is a higher ideal than the isolation connoted by the word "Independence." No nation can now be really independent. All free nations are inter-dependent, and will become so, more and more, to the advantage of each.

That being my bedrock principle, showing itself clearly and definitely as the demand of India through the All-Parties' Conference Report, signed by myself as one of the Committee of which Pandit Motilal Nehru is the admirable Chairman, I, of course, uphold that Report.

Those of us who believe that the supreme duty for every Indian and for every lover of India is to work for the Freedom of India cannot desert this duty for a year and devote ourselves to social reforms, under the camouflage of preparation for Dominion Status. Government constantly urges this idea upon us, but "in vain is the net spread in the sight of any bird." We know that the gaining of Freedom is essential for the passing of real social reforms, for the foreign Government has no interest in such reforms, and moreover has opposed them with singular consistency, because it fears to offend the orthodox Hindus. If

Indians had had their way, the age of consent and of marriage for girls would long ago have been raised to 16, but even the latest of these bills has been referred to a Committee, as though the subject had not been sufficiently threshed out long years ago, and as though meeting after meeting of Indian women had not voted unanimously in favour of a later age than the present — 16 years being the usual demand.

The Nehru Report has now been put on the shelf, while we “prepare,” though the Committee began work on it in February, 1928, and we are not even permitted to complete it, thus giving rise to the idea that the matter is of small importance. Fortunately, the Liberal Federation is more active in this behalf than is the Congress, so the popularisation will go on. The Nehru Report should be completed and then drafted as a Bill for presentation to Parliament, and should be made a live question in the coming General Election in Britain. Some of us propose to go over to England to explain and advocate it before the electors. But while our immediate destiny is to be settled this year, we are calmly to go to sleep, or play about with social reforms.

Those who feel the urgency of winning Swaraj cannot go to sleep and cease to work for it during this critical year. Of these I am one.

When we examine the leading political organizations in the light of this principle, we find that the Congress,

the premier political organization, having passed under the control of the non-political Mr. Gandhi, has abandoned its political duty and has betaken itself to a programme of social reforms for a year, at the end of which N.-C.-O. is to be revived.

Unable to rise to these heights of compromise and to pursue two opposed paths at the same time, I looked about to see if there were a party available, ready whole-heartedly to support the All-Parties' Conference Report, and to work for it during the coming year. The Congress having passed into political coma, was there any other body, besides the Home Rule League, willing to stand by the Report?

Happily, the Liberal Federation has taken up the matter, and has very generously placed me on its Council, so as to mark its interest in the matter, and its recognition of my work for it. Our general principles being in common, I gladly accepted the unexpected honour of having been elected to the Federation Council; it will strengthen my hands in working for the Report, especially as the Congress turned me out of its Working Committee, as I am against the empty profession of Independence, am against the severance of the connection with Britain, and work steadily for the Nehru Report, which preserves that connection. I had resolved to dissociate myself from Congress activities, if it reaffirmed the Independence resolution of Madras, so, on this point,

the Congress and myself were in agreement. Moreover, the adoption by the Congress of Mr. Gandhi's N.-C.-O. methods, which I have opposed from their inception in India, would have compelled me, in honour, to stand apart from it. Harmonious cooperation is impossible between people divided on questions of principle. Such divisions, honestly stated and worked for, need not alienate political workers from each other ; on the contrary, they are useful to both, for sensible people study the views of their opponents, in order to discover their own weak points from the criticisms levelled against them. We learn more from our opponents than from our allies.

The resolution of the Liberal Federation demanding Dominion Status is in startling advance of the delaying policy of the Congress ; it demands that " the system of Government to be established in place of the present system should be the same as that which prevails in the self-Governing Dominions which are equal members of the British Commonwealth of Nations, and that this step shall be taken immediately. Any further delay and postponement is fraught with danger to the mutual relations of India and England."

The President, Sir Chimanlal Setalvad emphasized the need of the Government taking " a bold step, to take courage in their hands, and to concede at once what we have been asking for, namely Dominion Status."

## WHO WILL STAND FOR INDIA'S FREEDOM? 101

Comparing this with the abandonment of political work by the Congress, can any one wonder that I, a fighter for India's Liberty, throw in my lot with these men, in the struggle to set India free?

—(*New India* 10 January 1929).

## HINDUISM AND NATIONALITY

IN a friendly leaderette in *The Leader* of Allahabad, attention is called to a phrase of mine in one of my addresses at the Theosophical Convention, lately held at Adyar: "A revival of Hinduism was absolutely necessary for the growth of India as a Nation." *The Leader* asks what was meant by the word "revival," and says:

Does the following subsequent passage in the speech supply the interpretation?—"In India the younger generation were rather inclined to be indifferent to the faith of their fathers and to look to the West rather than to the East for the spring of their national life." It is perfectly true that while "from the West, Asia had much to learn in the way of science, in the way of carrying on trade and commerce, etc. . . . in the higher regions of metaphysics, philosophy and spirituality the East was ever leading the way."

Yes. When I first came to India in 1893, the younger generation, from college students to men who were reaching middle life, were disciples of John Stuart Mill,



Huxley, and Spencer, not only in politics and in science, but also in agnosticism. A few, here and there, among the many of the educated whom I met, were profoundly religious, holding a wide and enlightened but deeply spiritual form of Hinduism, and presenting that great faith in the most attractive of aspects, satisfying the intellect and inspiring the emotions. But the large majority had revolted from the narrow orthodox conceptions, and, in that revolt—as did so many in the West in regard to Christianity—they had thrown aside religion in rejecting theology. It seemed to me then, it seems still, that the revival of the spirit of their splendid faith in that generation, and the inculcation of it in their children, was a necessary preliminary for a vigorous and lofty National life. It was necessary, because, alike in the sublimity of its spirituality and the intellectual splendour of its philosophy, Hinduism stands supreme among the religions of the world. To realize this supremacy was to establish National self-respect, and to see India, in religion and philosophy, as the teacher, not the pupil, of the West. It needed a spiritual impulse to reawaken the eager self-sacrifice which is the essence of public spirit, and the sense of unity which is the life-blood of a Nation. I believed then, as I believe now, that :

There was no progress possible for any form of human activity if the roots of that activity were not struck deep in the ocean of spiritual life. There was

no possibility of National spirit in the country without self-respect being the very basis of the Nation, and therefore it was necessary to hold up the great ideal of the past India, mighty in knowledge, mighty in intellect, mighty in religion and in physical prosperity.

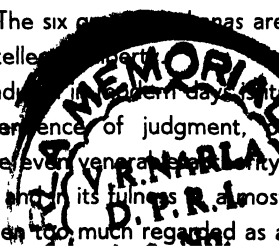
It was necessary, also, as *The Leader* says, to take care that "superstitions that hamper social progress" should not be "bolstered up." Superstitions are as fatal to religion as is scepticism, with the added danger that they foster credulity, while scepticism encourages inquiry and stimulates mental activity. Knowledge, and knowledge only, destroys both, by replacing blind credulity and blind incredulity alike by the observation of facts. There are, in all great religions, ceremonies and observances which are based on a knowledge of the laws of nature working in superphysical as well as in physical matter; these were regarded as superstitions in the latter part of the nineteenth century by many scientifically educated men, but the more advanced science of the twentieth century is beginning to adumbrate their value. "A little knowledge," as Bacon said, "inclineth a man to atheism; but deeper knowledge bringeth him back to religion." Many of us have found that to be true.

It was, and is, my belief that Hinduism is the most potent lever for raising India into National Self-Consciousness; it was that belief which made me spend my first few years here chiefly in the effort to arouse

Hindus to a recognition of the supreme value of their National religion. The educational propaganda trod closely on the heels of the religious work, the urging of a National education which should recognize religion and morals as an integral part of the teaching of youth. Inevitably with this became interwoven the social question of child-parentage—the premature fatherhood that sapped the health of the school-boy, the premature motherhood that imposed purdah on the girl-child, and removed her from school before the most precious years for education had begun. But these child-marriages were no part of the older Hindu religion in the days of its virility; Damayanti was no child when she loved Nala; Savitri was no child when she went forth from her father's house, found and pledged her maiden faith to Satyavan, and held to her word against parents and Narada.

Hinduism, beyond all other faiths, has encouraged intellectual effort, intellectual research, and intellectual freedom. The only authority recognized by it is the authority of Wisdom, and that convinces the reason, it does not trample on it. The six great Upanas are the proofs of Hinduism's intellectual liberty.

The main defect of Hinduism in modern days is its loss of virility, of independence of judgment, of following conscience despite even venerable authority as did Bali. Hinduism was, and in its fulness is, a manly faith; but it has been too much regarded as a



religion of Sannyasins only. The other side of it needs to be emphasized, the threefold object of the life of the ordinary man : Dharma, Kâma and Artha.

The civilization and culture of India must be mainly based on Hinduism in the future as in the past, a Hinduism enlightened, progressive, virile, keeping touch with the past, but advancing boldly into the future, and discarding all that is outworn and useless. Hinduism is peculiarly fitted to shape and colour the National future, for it is non-aggressive as regards other religions : it makes no converts, it assails no beliefs, it is as tolerant and patient as the earth. "Mankind comes to me along many roads. By whatever road a man comes to me, on that road do I welcome him, for all roads are mine." So spoke Shri Krishna. It is all-embracing in its reverence for spiritual greatness ; it honours the Pariah Saint, and places flowers on the tomb of the Muhammadan Fakir. It has no quarrel with any other religion ; it asks only to be unmolested in the practice of its own.

In political matters, religious differences have no place. The citizen as citizen is all that the State should know. Favouritism of one creed by the State is ever a source of civic trouble, and all the devices current here to thwart and frustrate the National will—appointed members, separate electorates, and the rest—are all anathema to the free citizen. A method

for the representation of minorities should be studied with the help of English thinkers, if needed, but it should be based on political, not religious, differences. Hindus and Muhammadans must be only Indians to the State. In their respective religions they have an equal right to freedom, to protection by the law. We who regard Hinduism as the greatest of living faiths, as the mother of all Aryan religions, we ask for it no privileges—it can hold its own, where the State does not preferentiate against it. We know that, by its own inherent strength, it will do more than any other religion can do, to strengthen Indian Nationality. For it is of India, in India ; it looks not outside India for its sources of inspiration. Its sacred scriptures are indigenous ; its sacred language has come down from time immemorial ; it treasures the traditions of the past ; it is throbbing with the hopes of the future. Our National cry is couched in its ancient tongue :  
VANDE MATHARAM.

—(*New India*, 9 January 1915).

faith had a philosophy worthy of being presented to the learned. Lastly, they had to see if the Faith had a side in which it was trying to gain spiritual knowledge, so that those who were willing to make sacrifices to gain real knowledge of the higher life might find helpers and teachers. On all these four points, Islam could thoroughly justify itself. People in England had a vague idea about the Prophet and their idea was a blasphemous one, that His character was not a very noble one. If people only took the trouble to verify the truth of what they had heard, they would have found that the Prophet was called "the trustworthy" by his fellowmen, and that one word conveyed the idea of the nobility of the man, who had wonderful power, strength and inspiration to change the character of the people round him in a way that they themselves testified to. An extraordinary characteristic of the Prophet was humility. The Prophet's sayings were exquisite, and some of them were on charity, and they were as practical as they were beautiful. Nothing could be more false to history than to speak of Musalmans as a people of the backward classes. It was the Musalmans of Arabia, those who were called the Moors who, when they began their great career of victory, conquered the north of Africa, crossed to Spain and built a wonderful civilization there. In that civilization they had the proof of what Islam could do in the way of splendid imagery and one of the most wonderful

conceptions of the Divine Nature that had been written by human hands. They found one of the most wonderful descriptions written by a metaphysician and poet in the Middle Ages : " I died out of the stone and became a plant ; I died out of the plant and became an animal ; I died out of the animal and became a man. When did I grow less by dying ? All things shall perish save His Face." There was the doctrine of evolution supposed to have been discovered in later ages. The writer laid down in a nutshell the whole theory of evolution and that theory was made the foundation for no fear of death.

Islam had a great part to play in Indian life. Musal-  
mans were one Nation in their faith. They were all  
brothers and lived brotherhood, while many other reli-  
gions taught it, but did not practise it. Islam was the one  
great democratic religion of the world. If an attempt  
were made, as Dr. Besant advised, to have the splendid  
Islamic scriptures translated into the modern languages  
of Europe, that would do more to raise Islam in the  
eyes of the world than anything else that it would be  
possible to do. At present, the obstacle to Indian  
freedom was the quarrel between Hindus and Musal-  
mans, and it was said that only the British people could  
hold the scales between the two Faiths. India had a  
life practically immemorial, and she had still so much  
to give to the world ; but she could not do that while  
she had her internal troubles, and so long as Hindus

and Musalmans were quarrelling with one another. There were no quarrels in villages where Hindus and Musalmans lived side by side. Let them all, as far as they could, be friendly to men of all Faiths and hostile to none.

—(*New India*, 28 February 1929).



## THE PART OF WOMEN IN THE UPLIFT OF INDIA

ON all hands it is admitted that no country can rise high among the nations of the world, unless its men and its women work together for its uplift ; differences may arise as to the fashion of the co-operation, and various communities have seen the question from different view-points ; but that a high type of womanhood is as necessary for the national welfare as a high type of manhood, that is granted on all hands. The position of women in Modern India is abnormal and transitional, due chiefly to the fact that, during the last century, two civilizations have been living side by side in the land, and that the men have, by force of circumstances, been largely moulded by the one, while the women have continued to be shaped by the other. The women continue to be wholly eastern, while the men are largely western, and so the old co-operation is lacking. The man has lost his sympathy in religion with the woman, while the woman has lost her sympathy in public life with the man, leaving both the poorer for the double loss ; religious life has been

narrowed by the loss of intellectuality ; public life has been coarsened by the loss of idealism. India is divided in the forum and in the home ; instead of a double-aspected unity, she has become two separate units, and however loving may be the units, they are twain not one.

But while the woman remains eastern, she is not eastern of the older type. She has lost her knowledge while retaining her devotion ; she has lost her share in public life while retaining her authority in the home. It is clear from the recent, as well as from the ancient, records of India that the modern woman is a dwarfed and mutilated copy of the ancient model. The ideal women of ancient India were cast in heroic mould. Damayanti was consulted by the ministers and nobles of her husband's kingdom, and appealed to against his folly ; Sita remained fearless, although alone and surrounded by enemies, and, pressed too far to repeated self-justification, went away in quiet dignity ; Gargi faced great Sages in argument, and out-argued the greatest ; Kunti was the brave adviser of her sons ; Gandhari entered a council of warriors and chiefs to rebuke her arrogant son. And they left their successors behind them in the heroic women of Rajputana and Maharashtra ; women who aided their husbands in council, if need be, fought beside them in the field, sat on the gadi as Regents, held the sceptre as Queens ; who

has forgotten Tara Bai, and Chand Bibi, and Ahalya Bai—the last living on into the opening nineteenth century, and leaving behind her a flourishing kingdom, admirably administered. It is the coming of “English Education” that has made the gulf, that has dwarfed and exiled the woman from fullness of life, and has hardened and rendered less effective and less patriotic the man. For woman is man’s inspirer to greatness, and sacrifices acceptable to the gods cannot be rendered where she is not.

For India’s uplift, then, her daughters must come out from their seclusion, and take back their place in the common life, out of which they have slipped during the last century, to the sore detriment of the Motherland. They do not need to copy the western women, forced by economic conditions to become man’s rivals in the struggle for existence, to the great injury of the children born of them, whose vitality is lessened by ante-natal hardships; woman is not man’s double but his complement, as he is hers. Woman and man are the two eyes of humanity, and the axes of vision are different though correlated, and make for fuller vision than one eye can compass by itself. But neither man nor woman should be artificially restricted; each should unfold their respective capacities to the full, nor be shut out of any field by law or custom. What a human being can do, that he may do, provided that he injures none.

Woman must be educated : that is her fundamental need ; the treasures of philosophy, literature, science, art, must be thrown open to her as to man. There should be no storehouses of knowledge, locked by the key of sex. The Woman Sage is wanted as well as the Woman Saint, and women's wisdom as well as men's is needed to dig deeply and build strongly the foundations of the New India, the India of the Free. For her Religion must be philosophic and scientific, and Science must again become the handmaid of Religion. She will apply to practice the truths she learns far better than men are applying them, for she is the born administrator as man is the born legislator.

The tendency of woman to put into practice the truths she has learned is one of her marked characteristics. She is less of a theorist than is man, and is far more practical. Her instinct is to apply knowledge to conduct, rather than to remain content with it as an intellectual possession. And in this application she is not daunted either by difficulties or by the necessity of making sacrifices. Sacrifice is so essentially a part of her daily life as a wife, a mother, a mistress of her household, that she does not calculate it as does a man. It comes to her by habit, and the good of her unit, the family, so dominates her mind that it never strikes her to put her individual comfort in conflict with her devotion to those she loves. When that is extended to the country, when she makes the

larger interests her own, the same characteristic comes out.

During the patriotic resistance of Bengal to the ill-advised Partition sprung upon it by Lord Curzon—now happily undone by the gracious act of the King-Emperor—the women of Bengal took a very active part, and one of their manifestations shows this characteristic very forcibly. The brother of Swami Vivekananda, the Editor of the *Yugantar*, was sent to prison. There was a large gathering of Bengal ladies to shew sympathy with his mother, and their sympathy took the form not of condolence, but of congratulation.

Few realize the immense strength now latent in Indian Womanhood, ready to be aroused when they again interest themselves in public life. The agitation in Bengal against the Partition would very likely have died down, had it not been for the women, for the mothers. The Bengali and the Maharashtra women are the most highly-educated women in India—not always in reading and writing, though these also are more general than elsewhere, but in that true culture which grows out of a knowledge of literature, and out of that, inevitably, National pride. India's uplift will come speedily, when her daughters put to it their delicate, but strong, hands.

For India's uplift, the woman must have an open field, unfettered hands, and unimpeded activity. The two sexes were not evolved that one should enslave

the other, but that they should utilize for fuller life the differences which pertain to sex. Womanhood as well as manhood must be consecrate to the Motherland, for in their union lie the strength, the stability, the freedom of India.

—(*New India*, 16 July 1915).

## THE UNIFICATION OF THE SCOUT MOVEMENT IN INDIA

OUR readers know that when I saw that the advantages of the Boy Scout Movement, which was spreading over all the world, was confined in India to British and Anglo-Indian (Eurasian) boys, I started with the help of friends an Indian Boy Scouts Association—commonly then called the I.B.S.A. It was modelled on Sir Robert Baden-Powell's famous movement, with the hope that, after the War, it might become part of the Imperial and World organization. It spread rapidly by its inherent worth. Later, the then Governor of Madras—becoming very hostile to me as the founder and leader of the Home Rule movement—started an organization for Indian boys in opposition to ours, and through the Education Department, banned our older Association and favoured his own. In the United Provinces, a Boy Scout movement grew up in connection with the Seva Samiti; later, a Government movement was started; so that with the original B.P. organization, our I.B.S.A., the Seva Samiti, and the Government Movement, the U.P. had four independent Scout Associations. In

Bombay, Madras and some other Provinces, there were three. This was obviously undesirable, for, in a movement founded on Brotherhood and Service, and with part of its Law the obligation that a Scout is "a brother to every other Scout," it was fairly obvious that to have three or four rival Associations competing for members was only excusable while the War made it difficult to provide efficient Scout Masters—a necessity very rightly insisted on by Sir Robert Baden-Powell, the founder and head of the movement, and also by the Government of India. It was obvious that irregularly-formed and badly-trained Scouts would prejudice the whole movement, that its true spirit might be checked and its object frustrated. In order, therefore, that all that was possible should be done to bring India into the current of the original movement, the Chief Scout of the World, the Head of the Imperial and International Movement, came over to India, accompanied by his wife, and visited the many centres, in which the Scouts of all the organizations joined in common rallies to welcome and honour them.

In Madras, by Lord Willingdon's initiative, the two Indian movements had amalgamated into the South Indian Boy Scouts Association. A Conference was held in Calcutta, at the Viceroy's request, so that, before Sir Robert came, the way to amalgamation might be smoothed. It finally agreed on an outline Constitution, in which an Advisory Central Council



should be formed, Indians entering the Association on a footing of perfect equality with the older "B. P." Movement already existing in India. This equality is now thoroughly recognized, and no difficulty on that score exists. The one point which is likely to be taken up and used by the enemies of the movement, or by those who dislike the idea of drawing India and Britain into more vital union by the presence of the youth of both Nations on equal terms in a single Association, common to the whole Empire, and serving as a bond of friendship between the two races, is that the Scout Promise has always been :

On my honour I promise that I will do my best :

To do my duty to God and the King.

To help others at all times.

To obey the Scout Law.

The second clause in the Scout Law binds the Scout to be loyal to the King, to his Country, to his Parents, etc.

In forming the I.B.S.A., we did not realize that there was a special object in putting into the first clause *only* "God and the King," i.e. that these were the only things that held together the separate Nations in the Empire, the only things all the Nations had *in common*. Their countries were all different, and in each Patriotism had to be nourished along the lines of its own history. We took the first of the three clauses as "God, Crown and Country"—"Crown "

because "Emperor" or "King-Emperor" was too long, and "Country" because we did not realize that we were importing separation where union was sought. People who seek Non-Co-operation instead of Co-operation seize upon this, and say the movement is not patriotic, whereas Patriotism is of its very essence, for a boy cannot become a Scout unless he obeys the Scout Law. It is the elders who hate England, who try to stir up the boys, and thus to draw them away from the movement which trains them as good citizens of their Motherland and of the great Commonwealth of Nations, the Indo-British Empire. Sir Robert Baden-Powell kindly suggested that all who had taken the promise in that form might keep it, all new admissions taking the promise in its original form. This would make a division within the movement, and on Scout Day, when the Promise is repeated, a diminishing number would repeat the old form, and be different from their Brother Scouts in form, which seems a pity; there is, of course, no difference in the binding nature of the Patriotism obligatory upon all. I hear that some Non-Co-operators, active in imposing on boys sacrifices they do not share, are busy in trying to injure the movement by their favourite method of sowing differences. Well, they must go along their disintegrating way. But the main current of the Boy Scout Association will also go on, sweeping the best of the youth into its fertilising stream. Many

more will come in than will go out, and the mischievous element will disappear. All over the world the movement spreads and flourishes. The isolated India, for which the Non-Co-operators are working, will not come to the birth, for where evolution is carrying on Humanity towards Union, such a birth would be a monstrosity, fated to perish, because unable to breathe the pure air of BROTHERHOOD and SERVICE.

—(*New India*, 14 March 1921).

## GOKHALE, THE MAN

MRS. SAROJINI NAIDU, the sweet songstress of India, has written a booklet, full of her own charm, under the above title. It tells of G. K. Gokhale as his nearest friends knew him, not of Gokhale the patriot, Gokhale the statesman, Gokhale the leader, as the outer world loved and hated him, but of the inner man, loving, passionate, ardent, longing for sympathy, suffering under unkindness, consumed with an intense love for the Motherland, tender and strong, a mingling of man and woman, as in all natures that are truly great. Of these it may be said that "suffering is the badge of all our tribe"; in ancient Mysticism the path to greatness was ever the "Way of the Cross" and "Christ crucified" was not the method of death of a particular Man, but the symbol of all Men who, in varied measures, are the Saviours of a Nation, of a Race, of a World. The most sacred symbol of Christendom is the Crucifix, not because the great Jewish Teacher died upon a Cross, but because the Cross is the symbol of the great Teacher. The Crucified Anointed is a universal symbol, and long before "A.D. 33" was it proclaimed that "God hath reigned from the Tree."

In truth, the highest Royalty comes only to the crucified children of men ; they will reign when crowned rulers are forgotten.

Have we not men with us royal ?

Men the Masters of things ?

In the day when all things are made new,

All men, honest and true,

Shall adore whom their forefathers slew,

And those indeed shall be loyal,

And these indeed shall be Kings.

Of these was Gopala Krishna Gokhale, who was stoned during his life by many who united in his praise when the veil of death had dropped between him and public life. A supremely tragic life was his, but " of such is the Kingdom of Heaven."

Mrs. Naidu writes as an intimate personal friend, of " a close and lovely comradeship which I counted among the crowning honours of my life." It began in a speech of hers at the All-India Social Conference of 1906, and ended only with his earthly life ; " and though it was not without its poignant moments of brief and bitter estrangement, our friendship was always radiant both with the joy of spiritual refreshment, and the quickening challenge of intellectual discussion and dissent." Here is a close and accurate analysis which the writer of these lines can fully endorse :

It was to me a valuable lesson in human psychology to study the secret of this rich and paradoxical nature.

There was the outer man as the world knew and esteemed him, with his precise and brilliant and subtle intellect, his unrivalled gifts of political analysis and synthesis, his flawless and relentless mastery and use of the consummate logic of coordinated facts and figures, his courteous but inexorable candour in opposition, his patient dignity and courage in honourable compromise, the breadth and restraint, the vigour and veracity of his far-reaching statesmanship, the lofty simplicities and sacrifices of his daily life. And, breaking through the veils of his many self-repressions, was the inner man that revealed himself to me, in all the intense and urgent hunger of his need for human kinship and affection, in all the tumult and longing, the agony of doubt and ecstasy of faith of the born idealist perpetually seeking some unchanging reality in a world full of shifting disillusion and despair. In him, I felt that both the practical strenuous worker and the mystic dreamer of dreams were harmonized by the age-long discipline of his Brahmanical ancestry, which, centuries before, had evolved the spirit of the *Bhagavad Gita* and defined true Yoga as Wisdom in Action. But even he could not escape the limitations of his inheritance. Wide and just as were his recognitions of all human claims to equality, he had nevertheless hidden away, perhaps unsuspected, something of that conservative pride of his

Brahmanical descent which instinctively resented the least question of its ancient monopoly of power.

A very interesting glimpse is given of the four questions which weighed most on his mind in 1914. Compulsory education, the only solid basis on which to found any lasting National progress. The solution of the Hindu-Muhammadan question by the leaders of the two communities uniting in working for a few fundamental questions of equal and urgent importance to both. "The high privilege and heavy responsibility of the young generation whose function it was to grapple with more immense and vital issues than his generation had been called upon to face." And lastly, "the future of the Servants of India Society, which was the embodiment of all his dreams and devotion for India."

His last words to his friend, as she was leaving for India last October, were full of mournful presage: "I do not think we shall meet again. If you live, remember your life is dedicated to the service of the country. My work is done." The unveiling of his inner life to a woman, delicately and reverently shown in this little book is characteristic of a great man of action, of a truly great man, man and woman in one. His men friends know his man's sterner life of activity, but his woman-side, craving for sympathy, for affectionate understanding, turns to his women friends to gain from their love his inspiration and energy for action. Then

see, with pure longing to help and to console, the pain which he is too proud to show to men, the suffering which is not weakness, but the intarissable spring of strength. The mother in them smoothes with a touch that heals the wound over which it hovers, and the subtle sex difference, void of sex-passion, brings a balm which removes the smart of outraged dignity. Life's best blessing is, perhaps, such comradeship between those who are strong enough, worthy enough, to know it, an oasis in the arid sand of earth. Happy then is he who, in the midst of the strenuous life of outer labour, finds the "lovely comradeship" shewn in this little book.

—(*New India*, 15 May 1915).



## A GREAT LEADER

AMONG the names that will not die while India lives, is that of Bal Gangadhar Tilak, the son of Maharashtra. No man has been his equal in deep, passionate, all-sacrificing, all-pervading love of India ; it was his religion : it was a consuming flame that burned up everything that influences ordinary men ; he was nothing but an embodied patriotism. To him India was mother, wife, child, and friend ; to Her he dedicated talents that, used for meaner purposes, would have carried him high in any career he might have chosen ; his brain, keen, strong, subtle, the brain of a statesman, was wholly given to Her service ; Her enemies were his enemies ; Her servants his friends. He was the enemy of England ? Yes, because England kept India a Dependency, a subject Nation, when he would have seen Her in fact as he saw Her ever in his heart, the Crowned Nation, Mistress in Her own house. He would have been England's best friend, had England broken the yoke imposed by her on India. He was ready to conspire against her, to lead an armed rebellion, if there were any chance of thus making India

free ; he was ready to take the smallest measure of Reform, and use it to obtain more, as he said in 1919, for he was no headlong politician, but far-seeing, persevering, crafty, using any means which led him nearer to his goal. He never conspired for himself, but for India's Freedom he would conspire ; he never did a dishonourable thing for himself, but he counted it the highest honour to face what the world calls dishonour for India's Freedom, not a passive, but an active patriot, and he used for India the means that every Nation uses in war-craft, subtlety, strategy, secrecy ; he would fight as soldier or as secret service man, in uniform or out of it, in disguise or openly ; he would sin as well as suffer, kill, as a soldier kills, impersonally. That note of impersonality marked Tilak out among men. It was not self-abnegation, disregard of self, but utter unconsciousness of self.

In the great Congress of Amritsar, where Mr. Gandhi urged loyal Co-operation in response to the King's message, and others urged total Non-Co-operation, he remained non-committal, and for the sake of unity he finally assented to a compromise resolution which could be interpreted in either direction, but before leaving Amritsar, in a public speech, he struck the right note, " Responsive Co-operation." That was the same idea as was embodied in Gopal Krishna Gokhale's famous phrase : " Co-operating when we can, opposing when we must," and in my own propaganda I have adopted

and followed that policy, " Responsive-Co-operation." Had Tilak lived, it is clear from his policy throughout his life, that, as he said in 1919, he would utilize four annas worth of Reforms to gain the sixteen annas, and on those lines the National Home Rule League has steadily worked, using his own phrase. He would have been in the Assembly, and would have led the advanced party, and would either have dragged Mr. Gandhi with him, or would have broken with him ; in either case, he would have prevented the tragi-comedy of Non-Violent Non-Co-operation. Slowly the Nation is shaking off the glamour cast over it, and ere long we may once more see Maharashtra in the van of the advancing hosts of Freedom, inspired by the living Spirit, called in his latest embodiment Bal Gangadhar Tilak.

—(*New India*, 1 August 1923).

## LALA LAJPAT RAI

IT is difficult to find words in which to describe the loss that India has sustained in the passing away of Lajpat Rai. That he died as a result of the blows he received at the anti-Simon demonstration at Lahore, where he bade the crowd sit in safety on the ground, while he went forward to the barbed wire fence which barred the way by the high-handed police order, was a fitting end to his heroic life, a life of flawless courage and of uttermost sincerity. His fiery speech—that proved to be his last—at the All-India Congress Committee at Delhi only put into words the story of his life, a bold declaration of principles and a life in accord with his words.

In Council he was apt to think aloud, putting the arguments on either side, but his vote could be forecast by his principles. In action he was ever alert, swift to see an advantageous opening in the ranks of his foes. His hatred of hypocrisy, of subterfuge, his fiery contempt for timidity in action preceded by boldness in words, changed the atmosphere of the Congress Committee. His Delhi speech was his last ;

he was to have presided at a meeting in support of the Nehru Report, but he was in pain, and asked me to take his place ; of course, I gladly consented, little thinking that it was the last small service which I could render him.

It is a great thing to be sure of your comrades in a fight, to know that there will be no flinching, no shrinking back. To be with Lajpat Rai in a struggle was to have that supreme consolation. Victory or defeat matters little ; they " come and go, impermanent," but the Soul on which you can fearlessly depend, that is priceless, and makes life free from all anxiety. One knows that if one falls, the comrades will go on till they too find death or victory. And Lajpat Rai will look on at those he left behind and will welcome us when we join him, if we fight with clean weapons and never strike " below the belt."

Doubtless a statue will be raised to him, as is the convention. But his true memorial will be in the courage he will still inspire, in the honour which, like his, will remain unstained, in the victory for Freedom which will be his as well as theirs whom he has left to fight the battle to the end. Not only those who live to greet the triumph will be honoured when India's Freedom blazes out upon the world. The leaders of every forlorn hope, the lads of Bengal who died on the scaffold, the exiles like Aurobindo Ghose in Pondichery, the singers like Bharati, the morning stars like

Gokhale, and many another announcing the Rising of the Sun—on that Golden Roll of Victory shall shine with theirs the name of Lajpat Rai. Why should we mourn for him, who is among the Immortals? Rather let us work to rise into their ranks.

—(*New India*, 22 November 1928).

## PROPHET AND POLITICIAN

MANY years ago, speaking on *The place of Politics in the life of a Nation*, I suggested three grades of Nation-builders : The Prophet, who created and held up the idea : the Popularizer, who familiarized the public with it ; the Politician, who carried it into practice, amid the controversies of the world. Of these the Prophet obviously occupies the highest place, for he is the Inspirer, the true Poet, who makes a Nation possible. Such a part played Mazzini, the Prophet of United Italy, the great Idealist, who generated Young Italy.

Such part, I venture to think, is the part which is natural for Mr. Gandhi, and in that sense I wrote of him when he was in Madras before. That role he takes, holding up the loftiest ideals, and scourging the weaknesses which sap the strength of peoples. He is built for that great office, and proved it by his power to lead a community into the path of passive resistance and of suffering, himself " bearing all things, enduring all things," with utter fearlessness.

It is no disparagement of him to say that he is " a child in politics," for his life has not led him into political ways. He led a forlorn hope, and won. That was

a struggle for liberty to be won by passive resistance. But a struggle for liberty in the political field, though full of danger and often of suffering, is active, not passive, and in that is needed the politician not the prophet. The politician is a fighter, with the qualities and defects of his dharma. His work is not as lofty as that of the Prophet, but it is as necessary, and their dharmas are not opposed but complementary. Politics are full of compromises, and the Prophet cannot compromise. He must uphold the ideal without compromise, else his value is lost. The politician must keep his eyes fixed on the ideal for his guidance, but he must build bridges over gulfs, and ladders up precipices. Mr. Gandhi feels that to consider time and place and surroundings is treason to truth. I, in the humbler role of the politician, regard them as factors in the great political game, the lila of Nations. . . . In our different ways, he and I both try to serve "God and the People," and though we may differ in methods, we have but a single goal.

—(*New India*, 16 February 1916).



# THE COMMONWEALTH OF INDIA BILL.

## ITS JOURNEY FROM MADRAS TO THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

THE General Council at the Convention of its meeting on April 13, 1925, at Cawnpur, decided to transform itself into the National Convention Samiti, and to admit persons of 18 and over to its membership, so as to create a large body of persons prepared to rally round the Commonwealth of India Bill, completed on that day. Until now, the National Convention had been composed of Members and ex-Members of the Legislatures, Central and Provincial (231), the members of the Council of the National Home Rule League (19), and elected representatives of the Political Sections of the 1921 clubs in Madras, Bombay and Calicut (3), the co-opted representatives of the Indian Women's Association (2), and the late Law Member of the Governor-General's Council, 256 in all, and this Convention is responsible for the Commonwealth of India Bill. Until now, every member has been an elected representative, all but a handful belonging to the elected.

Members of the Legislatures. We say to Britain : “ This is the work of Indian legislators, made by yourself.”

No proposal of a Round Table, or other Conference approaches the above in representative character. The Swarajists want the Government to call one ; this was called by elected representatives of the Nation. They, in the Assembly, where the demand is made, numbered less than 53 men, whom they dub “ the Nation ” ; this was composed of members elected by the constituencies created by the Act of 1919. They represent one party ; this comprised all.

In February 1922, in a discussion in the Political Section of the 1921 Club, Madras, on the method of winning Swaraj, Mr. V. S. Ramaswami Sastri, the Assistant Editor of *New India*, made the suggestion that India should resort to a Convention for the framing of a Constitution. The discussion continued for some weeks, and was followed by a number of articles in *New India* by leading Indian politicians. In September, 1922, Dr. Besant was asked to go to Simla as the representative of the Political Section of the Club and lay before the Legislature, then in session, the idea of calling a Conference to discuss the basis of a Constitution for India. Mr. Jamnadas Dwarkadas circulated an invitation to meet Dr. Besant, and she laid the proposal before a number of Members of the Assembly, who, after discussion, approved it with one dissident ; it was then laid before Members of the

Council of State, who approved it unanimously ; and a joint meeting of the two bodies was held and elected an Executive from among themselves, comprising members from each Province, who should call a Conference during the next session of the Legislature at Delhi, to decide on the steps to be taken to frame a constitution for India, which should carry out the resolution of the National Congress of 1914, and place India on an equality with the Self-Governing Dominions of the British Empire.

The Conference met in February, 1923, at Raisina, Delhi, and after considerable discussion laid down the bases on which a Constitution should be framed, fulfilling the above resolution. These were formulated in a pledge, drawn up by the Executive elected by the Conference, to be taken by candidates at the elections of 1923, and binding on the members of the Conference. The Conference also directed that an educative propaganda should be carried on in the country, organised by the members of the General Council in their own Provinces, in order to familiarise people with the principles on which a Free Constitution should be based.

Candidates of all political parties took the pledge, which also bound them to call a National Convention, which should frame a Constitution for India.

The second Conference met in February, 1924, at Raisina, Delhi, and fixed the place and date of the

Convention. It merged itself in the Convention, which met at Allahabad in April 1924, and elected, as its General Council, the members of the National Conference who were members of the Legislature, or of the Council of the National Home Rule League, and also the elected representatives of the Political Sections of the three 1921 Clubs, and a co-opted member to represent the Indian Women's Association. It further elected Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, K.C.S.I., LL.D., as President, the Rt. Hon. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, P.C., as Vice-President, Dr. Annie Besant as General Secretary, and Mr. A. Ranganatha Mudaliar, M.L.C., as Treasurer, the four officers who had also been elected by the Conference. It then divided itself into seven Committees—to each of which was allotted a special department of the proposed Constitution—to collect information and base thereon a report, to be sent in during the following autumn, outlining the basis of their several portions of the Constitution. At the same time, papers were to be published dealing with details of the questions involved. Of these, 40 have been published, sent gratis to every member of the National Convention and sold at one anna each to the general public.

The Convention met again in Bombay on December 19, 20, 21, 22, 1924, to consider a rough draft, based on the Reports of its Committees. It was carefully discussed and amended and finally ordered to be

printed and widely circulated for suggestions and amendments, as a Draft Bill. This again has been revised in the light of amendments received, and was considered for the last time in the Convention sitting at Cawnpur, on April 11, 12 and 13, 1925. The final Draft was committed to a special Committee in Madras, consisting of the Hon. Mr. C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar, Messrs. Shiva Rao, Sri Ram, Yadunandan Prasad and Dr. Annie Besant, with power to correct any oversights in language where necessary, to see the Bill through the press, and publish it in the name of the Convention.

As to the authority behind the Convention, it may fairly be claimed that there is no other body in India which comprises so many representatives elected by Constituencies in every Province in India to the Provincial and Central Legislatures, associated for a single purpose, the winning for India of Swaraj, Dominion Status, Home Rule, by the creation of a Free Constitution. This Constitution was completed on April 13, 1925, six years after the massacre of Jallianwala Bagh, and is India's fitting answer to that horror, for it stirred her up to a resolute determination to win a Freedom which should render the repetition of that tragedy for ever impossible. The seed sown in that field of blood has sprung up as a Nation determined to be Free.

The Bill has been before the public and the press for a long time and was submitted to Parliament at its

last session as a Private Bill, read a first time, and ordered to be printed. It was then submitted to the Advisory Committee of the Parliamentary Labour Party, discussed clause by clause, and unanimously recommended to His Majesty's Opposition for recognition as an official Bill. It was placed on the official list and ballotted for in the present session. Before its first reading, it was placed in the hands of the Rt. Hon. Sir Henry Slessor, the Solicitor General in the late Labour Government, and the leading Parliamentary Draftsman, for technical corrections and putting it into Parliamentary language.

### A CONVENIENT NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY<sup>1</sup>

The following are the main principles underlying the Commonwealth of India Bill :

#### GENERAL PRINCIPLES

(1) India shall be placed on an equal footing with the Self-Governing Dominions, sharing their responsibilities and their privileges.

<sup>1</sup> Certain provisions of this Bill, if taken up for consideration today, will, of course, have to be revised without prejudice to the underlying principles of the Bill as a whole, but in the light of the working of provincial Autonomy as adumbrated in the Government of India Act of 1935, and in the light of the second part of that Act, which aims at welding the British Indian Provinces and the Indian States into a Federation.

(2) India shall have the right to Self-Government exercised from the Village upwards in each successive autonomous area of wider extent.

(3) There shall be five Units of Government, namely : (a) The Village (*Grama* or *Mauza*), (b) the Taluka (*Tasil* or *Pergana*), (c) the District (*Zilla*), (d) the Province (*Rashtra*) and (e) India (*Hindustan*) excluding the Indian States.

(4) The three great spheres of activity—Executive, Legislative and Judicial—shall be independent of each other while correlated in their working.

(5) The Government of India Act shall be repealed at the coming into operation of the Commonwealth of India Act.

## DECLARATION OF RIGHTS

(6) The following shall be the Fundamental Rights of every person : (a) Inviolability of the liberty of the person and of his dwelling and property. (b) Freedom of conscience and the free profession and practice of religion. (c) Free expression of opinion and the right of assembly peaceably and without arms and of forming associations or unions. (d) Free elementary education. (e) Use of roads, places dedicated to the public, courts of justice and the like. (f) Equality before the law, irrespective of considerations of Nationality ; and (g) Equality of the sexes.

## THE ALL-INDIA GOVERNMENT

(7) There shall be a Parliament which shall consist of the Governor-General as the King's Representative, a Senate and a Legislative Assembly.

(8) The salary of the Governor-General shall be fixed by Statute, but may be altered by the Commonwealth Parliament.

## THE SENATE

(9) The Senate shall be composed of 100 citizens of not less than 30 years of age who have done honour to the Nation by reason of useful public service.

(10) Half the number of Senators from each Province shall retire every three years, and the vacancies shall be filled by means of election from out of a panel consisting of three times the number of vacancies. The panel shall be constituted by nominations of equal numbers by the Senate, the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council of the Province concerned, and shall also include such other persons as, having been Members of the Council of State under the Government of India Act of 1919 or of the Senate, signify their desire to be so included.

(11) The electors shall be (a) Members and ex-Members of Legislative Councils and ex-Members of



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the Indian Legislature from the Province under the Government of India Act 1919. (b) Registered Graduates of recognised Universities of not less than 7 years standing

### THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

(12) The Legislative Assembly shall be composed of 300 citizens of not less than 25 years of age possessing any one of the following qualifications (a) Education up to the Graduate stage or diploma granted for training after High School or equivalent general or technical education (b) Service as a Member of a Legislature for at least one complete term (c) Membership of recognised Chambers of Commerce, Landholders' Associations, Trade Union Councils, Industrial Associations or of some such body

(13) The life of the Legislative Assembly shall ordinarily be for five years, but it may be dissolved sooner by the Governor-General

(14) The electors shall be the following citizens of not less than 21 years of age (a) All Members of Legislative Councils and ex-Members thereof (b) All with education up to the Graduate level or equivalent general or technical education (c) All who have an income or allowance of Rs 50 per month and above (d) All owners or occupiers of land with Rs. 50 per annum or more as land tax (e) Those owning or occupying a

house or a part of it with the annual rental value of Rs. 75.

(15) No one who (a) has been convicted for an offence involving moral turpitude and sentenced to a period of not less than twelve months within five years of the election ; or (b) is an unrehabilitated insolvent ; or (c) is a lunatic ; or (d) is a Government servant, shall be eligible for Membership of any Legislature.

### POWERS OF THE PARLIAMENT

(16) The division of powers between the Parliament and Provincial Legislatures shall be fixed by Statute, but all residual powers shall be vested in the Parliament.

(17) The Parliament shall have full power over all Central subjects except as regards Defence, Foreign and Political Affairs, which shall come under its control when it signifies its readiness to assume it.

(18) The powers of the two Houses of the Parliament in respect of legislation shall be equal, except that Money Bills shall not originate in, nor be amended by, the Senate.

(19) In the event of disagreement between the two Houses, there shall be a Joint Session whose decision shall be final.

(20) The Governor-General shall have power to return any proposed measure to the House in which it

originated with his recommendation for any amendment to be considered and dealt with by the House.

(21) Every Bill passed by both Houses shall receive the assent of the King through the Governor-General within one year of the date of its passing, before it can have the force of law ; but it shall be open to the King to disallow a measure within one year from its receiving the Governor-General's assent.

## THE EXECUTIVE GOVERNMENT

(22) There shall be a Cabinet consisting of not less than seven Ministers of State from among the Members of Parliament who shall be collectively responsible for the administration of the Departments of the Commonwealth.

(23) The Prime Minister shall be appointed by the Governor-General, and the other Ministers on the nomination of the Prime Minister.

(24) The salaries of the Ministers shall be payable out of the consolidated revenue fund and shall be determined by the Parliament.

(25) The Governor-General shall be in charge of the Military, Naval and Air Forces of the Commonwealth.

(26) There shall be a High Commissioner for India in London, appointed by the Commonwealth Cabinet to perform such duties as may be assigned to him by the Cabinet.

## THE JUDICATURE

(27) There shall be a Supreme Court of India consisting of a Chief Justice and not less than two other Judges to be appointed by the King, whose salaries shall not be less than that of any Member of the Cabinet.

(28) The Supreme Court shall have original jurisdiction as regards treaty rights, inter-Provincial disputes and such other matters as are determined by Statute.

(29) The Supreme Court shall also have power to deal with all matters arising out of the interpretation of this Constitution or of any laws made by the Parliament.

(30) The Supreme Court shall be the final appellate authority in India unless it certifies that the question is one which ought to be determined by the Privy Council.

(31) The existing High Courts, shall have the same powers and authority as before the commencement of this Act.

## FINANCE AND TRADE

(32) The Commonwealth shall have full power over all revenues raised in its name and by its authority to form one consolidated revenue fund.

(33) No money shall be drawn from the Treasury of the Commonwealth except under appropriation made by law.

(34) The allocation of revenues between the Commonwealth and the Provinces shall be determined by rules.

(35) Trade, commerce and intercourse among the Provinces shall be free, and there shall be no preference given to any one Province or Provinces.

### THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT

(36) The legislative power of each Province shall be vested in the Governor, as the King's Representative, and a Legislative Council.

(37) The salary of the Governor shall be fixed by Statute, but may be altered by the Legislative Council.

### THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

(38) The Legislative Council shall be composed of citizens (the number varying according to the conditions of each Province) of not less than 25 years of age possessing any one of the following qualifications :  
(a) Education up to the high school level or equivalent general or technical training. (b) Membership of a District Board or Municipal Council at least for one complete term. (c) Membership of recognised Chambers of Commerce, Landholders' Associations, or Trade Union Councils or of some such body.

(39) The life of a Legislative Council shall ordinarily be for five years, but it may be dissolved sooner by the Governor.

(40) The electors shall be the following citizens of not less than 21 years of age : (a) All Members of District Boards or Municipal Councils or Legislatures or ex-Members thereof. (b) All with High School or equivalent general or technical education. (c) All who have a monthly income or allowance of Rs. 25 and above. (d) All owners and occupiers of land with Rs. 30 or more as land tax. (e) Those owning or occupying a house or a part of it of the annual rental value of Rs. 50 or more. (f) Members of Trade Union Councils, Merchants' or Traders' Associations or of some such body.

### POWERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

(41) The Legislative Council shall have full power over all Provincial subjects, but the authority of the Parliament shall be supreme in matters common to both.

(42) The Governor shall have power to return any proposed measure to the Legislative Council with his recommendation for any amendment to be considered and dealt with by the Council.

(43) Every Bill passed by the Legislative Council shall receive the assent of the King through the Governor within one year of the date of its passing, before it can have the force of law ; but it shall be

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open to the King to disallow a measure within one year from its receiving the Governor's assent.

### THE EXECUTIVE GOVERNMENT

(44) There shall be a Cabinet consisting of not less than three Ministers from amongst the Members of the Legislative Council who shall be collectively responsible for the administration of the Departments of the Province.

(45) The Chief Minister shall be appointed by the Governor and the other Ministers on the nomination of the Chief Minister.

(46) The salaries of the Ministers shall be payable out of the consolidated revenue fund of the Province and shall be determined by the Legislative Council.

### NEW PROVINCES

(47) The Parliament shall have power to alter the limits of existing Provinces, establish new Provinces and make laws for their administration.

### LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT

(48) The Village (Rural), or Ward (Urban), the Taluka, the District (Rural), or Municipality (Urban) shall be the Units of Local Self-Government.

(49) The following shall be the principles of Local Self-Government : (a) The Executive, Legislative and the Judicial functions of each Unit shall be performed by entirely different agencies. (b) The Executive in each Unit shall be responsible to the Legislature and the work of the former shall be supervised by the latter. (c) The Panchayats and Boards shall carry on their work by Committees appointed by themselves. (d) The Chief District and Taluka Executive Officers shall be appointed by a Provincial Commission appointed for the purpose, and shall be responsible for their work to the Taluka and the District Boards respectively. (e) The functions of the various Units of Government may be classified under the three Heads : (1) Education, (2) Protection, (3) Economic and Industrial, and are subject to the principle contained in (a). (f) Each Unit shall be supervised generally by the next higher Unit.

### THE VILLAGE

(50) There shall be a Panchayat in each village composed of citizens and elected annually by all residents of 21 years of age and above from among themselves. The Panchayat shall have power to administer all affairs in the village.

### THE TALUKA

(51) There shall be a Board in each Taluka composed of citizens of 25 years of age and above and elected



every three years from amongst those possessing any one of the following qualifications : (a) Education up to the primary grade. (b) Ex-Membership of Village Panchayats, having served for one complete term.

(52) The Electors shall be the following citizens of not less than 21 years of age : (a) All members of Village Panchayats or ex-members thereof. (b) All literates in the language of the Taluka. (c) All who have a monthly income or allowance of Rs. 10 and above. (d) All owners and occupiers of land with Rs. 10 per annum or more as land tax. (e) Those owning or occupying a house or part of it of the annual rental value of Rs. 6 and above.

(53) The Taluka Board shall have power to administer all affairs in the Taluka.

## THE DISTRICT

(54) There shall be a Board (Rural) or Council (Urban) in each District composed of citizens of 25 years of age and above and elected every three years from amongst those possessing any one of the following qualifications : (a) Education up to the Lower Secondary or Middle School grade. (b) Ex-membership of Taluka Boards or Ward Panchayats, having served for one complete term.

(55) The Electors shall be the following citizens of not less than 21 years of age : (a), All members of

Taluka Boards or Ward Panchayats or ex-members thereof. (b) All with primary education. (c) All who have a monthly income or allowance of Rs. 15 and above. (d) All owners or occupiers of land with Rs. 20 per annum or more as land tax. (e) Those owning or occupying a house or a part of it of the annual rental value of Rs. 18 or more.

(56) The Board or Council shall have power to administer all affairs in the Rural or Urban District respectively.

### THE DEFENCE COMMISSION

(57) There shall be a Royal Commission every five years, with a majority of Indians thereon, to fix the minimum expenditure on the Defence of the Commonwealth, to report on the development of the Defence Forces and to make recommendations.

### THE PUBLIC SERVICES

(58) There shall be a statutory guarantee of existing and accruing rights and of security of tenure to all public servants and pensioners at the commencement of the Commonwealth Act.

(59) There shall be appointed a Public Services Commission for dealing with all matters connected with the public Services.

LIABILITIES OF THE COMMONWEALTH

(60) The Commonwealth shall take over all the liabilities of the Government of India.

ALTERATION OF THE CONSTITUTION

(61) The Parliament shall have power to alter the Constitution by the system of Referendum.

—(*New India*, 21 January 1925).





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